THE LIFE OF OUR LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

With the LIVES of the

APOSTLES and EVANGELISTS.

CONTAINING,

I. The Genealogy of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, his Conception, Birth, Preservation, Life, Doctrines, Miracles, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension.

II. Of the Birth, Life, Imprisonment, and Death of the *Messiah*'s great Fore-runner, *John the Baptist*.

III. The Calling of the Twelve Apostles to the Ministry of the Holy Jesus, and of their Behaviour both before and after his Sufferings for the Redemption of Mankind.

IV. Of their Travels and most remarkable Transactions after Christ's Ascension, their Doctrines, and Regulations for the Government of the Church.

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THE PREFACE TO THE READER.

THE *historical Part of the* New Teſtament, *ſays the learned Mr.* Howel, *is contained in the Goſpels, and deſervedly claims our greateſt Eſteem, as conveying to us the bleſſed Tidings of our recovering that happy State which our firſt Parents forfeited in* Paradiſe. *All thoſe Excellencies, which in general belong to the* Old Teſtament, *may, in a more peculiar Manner be claimed by the* New; *for as St.* Auguſtin *ſays,* l. 1. de Conſenſ. Evang. c. 1. What the Law and the Prophets only foretold, the Goſpel plainly demonſtrates to have been compleated. *If therefore the good and holy Men, under the Diſpenſation of the Law, which was a Shadow of what hath ſince come to paſs, were encouraged to undergo the ſevereſt Perſecutions, in hopes of a Reward to come, what greater Encouragement had the Saints under the Goſpel to ſuffer Extremity, when the Reward was gone before*

them? From hence the Church in all Ages has drawn vaſt Advantage; hence the Martyrs in the Midſt of their Agonies took Magnanimity, looking up to the Author of their Reward. Thus the Protomartyr, St. Stephen, *in a Shower of Stones, was comforted with a Sight of the Son of God. Hence the holy Apoſtles, and the reſt of our Saviour's Followers, enforced the Doctrines of their Lord, not from their diſtant Relations of others, but from the more immediate Dictates of his Mouth, whence, by a ſacred and certain Tradition they have been handed to theſe Times. From hence, in the Times of Obſcurity and moſt ſubtil Hereſy, we are ſecure in the Eſtabliſhment of our Faith, and plentifully furniſhed with Arguments and Inſtructions againſt the moſt plauſible Errors. From our Saviour's more immediate Example, we learn Humility and Meekneſs, who, though the Son of God, condeſcended to the vile Condition of Humanity. From him we learn Patience in Adverſity, and Equanimity in the moſt elevated State of Life: And whatever Blemiſhes, by the Corruptions of Nature may ſtain our Profeſſion, his Word is our Rule and Guide to ſet us right again, and reſtore Religion to its primitive Purity. For this Reaſon our bleſſed Lord expreſly calls himſelf the Light of the World; of which his holy Goſpel is the happy Vehicle to convey it to Mankind, which, till his Incarnation ſat in Darkneſs. And hence the Royal Prophet* Iſaiah, *foretelling the Coming of our Saviour, ſays,* The People that walked in Darkneſs have ſeen a great Light; they that dwelt in the Land of the Shadow of Death, upon them hath the Light ſhined, *Iſa.* ix. 2. *Which is literally compleated in the Deliverance*

liverance of the World by Chriſt, *through the Preaching of the Goſpel.*

From the Precellence therefore of the Goſpel's conveying this Light to us, the Scriptures of the New Teſtament *have acquired ſuch Reverence and Veneration, that the Maſters of the World, in the earlieſt Ages of the Church, thought them worthy their higheſt Care and Eſteem.* Conſtantine the Great *had the Goſpels bound up in a Cover of Gold, ſet with moſt valuable Jewels.* Theodoſius *the Emperor tranſcribed the Goſpels with his own Hand, and ſpent good Part of every Night in reading them. The general Councils of* Nice, Epheſus, *and* Chalcedon, *placed the Book of the Goſpels in the midſt of their Aſſemblies: as* Nicephorus *tells us,* l. 4. c. 3. *that the holy Fathers might have Reſpect to them as to the Perſon of* Chriſt. *And St.* Cyril *of* Alexandria, *who lived in the Beginning of the fifth Century, tells us, it was by ſynodical Sanction ordained, that in all ſolemn Atteſtations they were to lay their Hand on the Book of the Goſpels, and invoke the Help of God in the Holy Goſpel. Which Solemnity is continued to this Day, when any one is obliged to take an Oath, nor was this only obſerved among the Orthodox, but when through Neglect of Diſcipline, and the Depravity of Morals, Error crept into the Church, the Hereticks themſelves paid the ſame Reſpect to the Goſpels, who, though they expunged ſome Books out of the Canon of Scripture, mutilated and depraved others, never offered by any ſacrilegious Attempt to touch or violate the Goſpels;* [*not but that ſeveral whimſical Innovators have topped upon the World ridiculous* Pſeudo-Goſpels:]

Nay,

Nay, in ſo great an Eſteem were the Goſpels among the Heathens, that St. Auguſtin *affirms* de Civitate Dei, l. 10. c. 29. *he had ſeen the Beginning of St.* John's *Goſpel among the Writings of the* Platoniſts. *So that the Theologiſts of all Ages have deſervedly, and with a general Conſent, ſtiled this Part of Holy Scripture moſt neceſſary and uſeful. And truly, if we have reſpect to the Subject-Matter, Author, and Method or Manner of them, we ſhall ſee thoſe Epithets juſtly appropriated to the Writings of the* New Teſtament, *and particularly to the Goſpels.*

The ſame learned Author makes the following Remarks on the Hiſtory of the *Acts of the Apoſtles: This Hiſtory is not enlarged to the Travels and Acts of all the Apoſtles, but confined chiefly to the moſt remarkable Paſſages of two,* viz. *of St.* Peter *and St.* Paul; *and therefore doth not pretend to give a full Relation of the Plantation of* Chriſtianity *in all Parts, whither the reſt of the Apoſtles muſt be preſumed to have gone out, as to their reſpective Provinces; but only affords us an Eſſay of what was done in* Judea *and* Samaria, *among the* Jews *remaining there, and in other Cities of* Syria, Aſia, *&c. among the* Jews *in their Diſperſions. It likewiſe gives us a Taſte only of the revealing the Goſpel to the* Gentiles; *firſt, to ſome ſingle Families, as that of* Cornelius; *and, after the* Jews *had given Evidence of their obſtinate Reſolutions of oppoſing them, eſpecially for their preaching to the* Gentiles, *then to whole Cities and Countries; profeſſedly departing to the* Gentiles, *as thoſe among whom they were aſſured of better Succeſs than they had found among the* Jews.

As to the Story of St. Peter's *Actions or Travels, the Relations here given are very few; and they proceed*

proceed no farther than to his Deliverance from Herod's *impriſoning him, and the Death of that Perſecutor, which happened in the Year of* Chriſt 44. *After which he is known to have lived four and twenty Years, and certainly was not an unprofitable Steward of that Talent with which God, in all that Time, had intruſted him.*

St. Luke *undoubtedly wrote his Hiſtory of the Apoſtolic Acts at* Rome, *at the End of St.* Paul's *two Years Impriſonment there, with which he concluded his Story. He is more particular in his Account of St.* Paul, *than of any other of the Apoſtles he mentions; for, beſides St.* Paul's *extraordinary and ſignal Activity in the Cauſe of* Chriſt, *which marked him out for doing and ſuffering much, St.* Luke *was his conſtant Attendant, an Eye-witneſs of the whole Carriage of his Life, and privy to his moſt intimate Tranſactions, and therefore capable of giving a more full and ſatisfactory Relation of them; ſince no Evidence or Teſtimony in Matters of Fact can be more rational and convincing than his, who reports nothing but what he had ſeen and heard. Among other Things, he gives a particular Account of thoſe great Miracles which the Apoſtles did for the Confirmation of their Doctrine.*

Thus far this learned Author. To which we ſhall add, that we do not intend to confine ourſelves abſolutely to the bare Facts as they ſtand related in the *Hiſtory of the Four Evangeliſts*, and the *Acts of the Apoſtles*. This would afford but little Inſtruction or Improvement to the curious and inquiſitive Reader. We have therefore conſulted Authors of the greateſt Eminence for Learning

Learning and Ability, from whom we have collected the beſt Materials; by Means whereof, I will be bold to ſay, this will be as complete a Work, when finiſhed, as is in the Power of human Capacity to furniſh out.

With Regard to the *Life of Chriſt*, it would be preſumptuous to add any Thing to what we find related of him in the *Four Goſpels*; yet, in the Courſe of that, we have many Occaſions offered to explain difficult Paſſages, to reconcile ſeeming Contradictions in the ſeveral Narrations of the ſacred Penmen, to explain many of the *Jewiſh* Rites and Ceremonies, which a common Reader may not be rightly informed of.

As to the *Lives of the Apoſtles*, the Account of which is but very ſhort in the *Acts*, we ſhall extend to a much greater Length, and take in whatever we find related by other Authors. Nor ſhall we give the *Hiſtory of the Lives, Tranſactions, Sufferings, and Deaths of the Apoſtles* only, but likewiſe of the *Four Evangeliſts*; all which conſidered, we doubt not but the ſerious and intelligent Reader will find this the moſt agreeable and entertaining Hiſtory, the moſt uſeful and inſtructive Narrative that he can poſſibly peruſe himſelf, or recommend to the Peruſal of his Family, Neighbours, or Friends.

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THE LIFE OF OUR LORD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.

CHAP. I.

From the BIRTH *of* CHRIST *to the Beginning of the* First Paſſover.

AS an Introduction to the following Hiſtory, it may be proper to inform our Readers of the true Signification of the Word *Goſpel*, the Title of the four Treatiſes from which this Narrative is taken.

THE Word *Evangelium* ſignifies, in general, *good News*, and is of the ſame Import with our *Saxon* Word *Goſpel*; only in the ſacred Uſe of them both there ſeems

to be a *Metonymy*, whereby the Words that denote *good News*, are ſet to ſignify *the Hiſtory* of that good News, *viz.* of the Birth and Life, the Miracles and Doctrine, the Death and Reſurrection of our Saviour *Chriſt*; all of which, put together, do make up the joyful Tidings, which we call the *Goſpel*: And from this Etymology of the Word, the Perſons who have recorded the Life and Actions of our Saviour, are called *Evangeliſts*, or Writers of the Goſpel. The Works of this Kind, which are received as canonical, are but four, *viz.* that of St. *Matthew*, St. *Mark*, St. *Luke* and St. *John*: but the ſpurious Pieces which are handed down to us (even though ſeveral of them be loſt) do exceed the Number of forty. The Truth is, the antient Hereticks began generally with attacking the Goſpels, in order either to maintain their Errors or excuſe them. To this Purpoſe ſome rejected all the genuine Goſpels, and ſubſtituted others, that were ſpurious, in their Room. This produced the Goſpels of *Apelles*, *Baſilides*, *Cerinthus*, the *Ebonites* and *Gnoſticks*. Others corrupted the true Goſpels, by ſuppreſſing whatever gave them any Trouble, and inſerting whatever might favour their erroneous Doctrines. Thus the *Nazarenes* corrupted the original Goſpel of St. *Matthew*, as the *Marcionites* did that of St. *Luke*; while the *Alogians* rejected St. *John*, as the *Ebonites* did St. *Matthew*; and the *Valentinians* only acknowledged St. *John*, as the *Cerinthians* did St. *Mark*.

THE two principal Prophets who determine the Period when our Lord was to appear in the World, are *Daniel* and *Haggai*. *Daniel* foretels, that at *the End of the ſeventy* prophetical *Weeks*, i. e. at the Expiration of four hundred Years after the Building of the Walls of *Jeruſalem*, the *Meſſiah ſhall come*, Daniel ix. 25. and *Haggai*, propheſies, that before the Deſtruction of the ſecond Temple, (even when the *Sceptre was departed from* Judah, *Gen.* xliv. 25.) the *Deſire of all Nations ſhall come*, and by his frequent perſonal

ſonal Appearance in the Temple, make the *Glory of the latter Houſe* much *greater than that of the former*; Hagg. ii. 7, *&c.*

IN the Year of the World 3999, the Time foretold by theſe Prophets for the Incarnation of the Son of God, the Evangeliſt St. *Luke* gives the Account of the Birth of his great Fore-runner *John the Baptiſt*. But firſt we ſhall premiſe ſomething of his Character and Miſſion from Scripture.

THERE are two Places in the Prophets referred to, both by our Saviour and his Evangeliſts, wherein, the *Baptiſt* is deſcribed under this Character. The former is in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, *The Voice of one crying in the Wilderneſs, prepare ye the Way of the Lord, make ſtreight, in the Deſart, an Highway for our God*, chap. xl. 3. and the latter (which is more plain and expreſs) is in *Malachi*, *Behold I will ſend my Meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the Way before me*, &c. chap. iii. 1. Both the Paſſages allude to Harbingers, and ſuch other Officers, as upon the Journies of Princes, are employed to take Care that the Ways be levelled, and put in Order, and all ſuch Obſtructions removed, as might hinder their Paſſage, or render it leſs commodious: And the Manner in which the *Baptiſt* thus prepared the Way of the Lord, was by his Preaching, and by his Baptiſm. By his Preaching he endeavoured to bring the *Jews* to a due Senſe of their Sins; to abate their Confidence in being of *Abraham*'s Seed and punctual Obſervers of the ceremonial Law; and to forewarn all of the dreadful Effects of God's Anger, who did not bring forth Fruits worthy of Repentance. And by his Baptiſm, when adminiſtered to ſuch Perſons as were under the Obligation of the Law, he plainly ſhewed, that he was therein admitting them to ſome Privileges, which they had not before, *viz.* the Remiſſion of their Sins upon their Faith and Obedience to him, who was the Meſſenger of the Covenant. Since therefore the *Baptiſt* was born ſix Months before our Saviour, and

entered upon his Miniſtry ſix Months before our Saviour began his; and ſince no Part of his Doctrine terminated in himſelf, and his Baptiſm referred every one to *Chriſt* for Acceptance and Salvation; he is very properly ſaid to be his Harbinger, *a Meſſenger ſent to prepare his Way before him*, or to ſet all Things in Readineſs for his Approach, by putting an End to the old, and making an Entrance into the new Diſpenſation; in which Senſe he is repreſented by the Fathers, as a Kind of middle Partition between the Law and the Goſpel; of the Law, as a Thing now come to a Period, and of the Goſpel, as commencing under him, who was ſhortly to make his Appearance. But to proceed in our Narrative:

WHILE his Father *Zacharias* (who was a Prieſt of the eighth Courſe, *viz.* the Courſe of *Abiah*) was executing his Office at *Jeruſalem*, (which was in the latter Part of the Reign of *Herod the Great*) it came to his Lot to go into the Temple with his Cenſer in his Hand, to burn Incenſe, while the People without were offering up their Supplications in the Court, that was called the *Court of Iſrael*. At the Altar of Incenſe he was greatly ſurprized with the Sight of an Angel ſtanding on the Right-Side of it; but the Angel ſoon diſſipated his Fears, with the joyful News, that God intended to bleſs him with a Son, whoſe Name ſhould be *John*, who ſhould prove a Reaſon of uncommon Merit, and be appointed to the Office of *Harbinger* to the *Meſſiah*, who, in a ſhort Time, was to make his Appearance.

THE Senſe of his own great Age, as well as his Wife's long Sterility, made *Zacharias* expreſs a Kind of Diffidence in his Promiſe; and for his farther Satisfaction, to deſire ſome Miracle in Confirmation of it: Whereupon the Angel let him know, *That he was no leſs than* Gabriel, *a ſpecial Attendant on God's Throne, and diſpatched on purpoſe to inform him of this great Happineſs; but that ſince he was ſo incredulous, as to require a Sign, he ſhould have ſuch an one as would*

would be both a Puniſhment of his Unbelief, and a Confirmation of his Faith; for until the Birth of the Child, he ſhould be both deaf and dumb: Which accordingly came to paſs: for when he came to the People, who waited to receive his Benediction, he made Signs, that he was not able to ſpeak to them, and they thence inferred, that he had ſeen ſome extraordinary Viſion within. After the Time of Miniſtration, however, was over, he returned home, and it was not long before his Wife *Elizabeth* perceived herſelf with Child, though her Modeſty made her conceal it for the Space of five Months.

BEFORE we proceed in the Thread of our Hiſtory, the following Remarks may be very neceſſary.

SOME of the Fathers were of Opinion, that this *Zacharias* was, at this Time, High-prieſt, upon a falſe Suppoſition, that the Offering of Incenſe was reſerved for the High-prieſt only: But, beſides the Teſtimony of *Joſephus*, who tells us expreſly, that *Simon* the Son of *Boethus*, was High-prieſt this Year; it appears from St. *Luke* himſelf, that *Zacharias* was no more than an ordinary Prieſt of the Family or Courſe of *Abiah*, which of the four and twenty Courſes appointed by *David* for the Service of the Temple, when it ſhould be built, was the eighth, 2 *Chron.* xxvi. 10. For tho' it was the High-prieſt's Prerogative, on the great Day of Expiation, to enter into *the Holy of Holies*, and there burn Incenſe, which no ordinary Prieſt might do, *Levit.* xvi. 12. yet, in the common Service of the Day, each Prieſt, whoſe Lot it was, went every Morning and Evening into the *Sanctum*, or Body of the Temple, and there burnt the daily Incenſe upon the Altar, which was placed before the Veil of the *moſt holy Place*, *Exod.* xxx. 6, *&c.* For theſe and ſeveral other Reaſons, which Annotators have produced, it ſeems plain, that *Zacharias* could not poſſibly be High-prieſt at this Time; and, whatever Credit may be given to the Tradition, That by the Order of *Herod the Great*,

he

he was put to Death, between the Porch and the Altar, *viz.* in the Incloſure that ſurrounded the Altar of Burnt-Offering; and that, when every one was ignorant of his Murder, a certain Prieſt, thinking that he ſtaid too long, entered into the Temple, and found him dead, and his Blood congealed upon the Ground, and at the ſame Time hearing a Voice, that it ſhould be never wiped out until his Revenger came: Whatever Credit, I ſay, may be given to this Tradition, it was doubtleſs upon this Foundation that many of the Antients thought, that *Zacharias*, the Father of *John the Baptiſt*, was that *Zachariah*, Son of *Barachiah*, mentioned by our Saviour in the Goſpel, whoſe Blood was ſhed *between the Temple and the Altar*.

ST. *LUKE* in particular takes Notice, that the Time when our Lord's Forerunner was to be conceived, was in the Reign of *Herod*, Son of *Antipater* (for it was *Herod Antipas* that put him to Death) commonly called *the Great*, who, under the *Romans*, fought his Way to the Government of the *Jews*, and came to this Throne by the Slaughter of their *Sanhedrim*; by which Means he extinguiſhed all the Dominion, which, till that Time, they held in the Tribe of *Judah*; not in a ſingle Perſon, indeed, (for that was extinguiſhed in the *Aſmonæan* Family) but in a ſelect Number out of the royal Tribe; and ſo verified the Prophecy of old *Jacob*, Gen. xlix. 10. *That the Sceptre*, or Government, *was departed from* Judah, *and the Law-giver from his Feet*, which was a certain Sign that *Shiloh*, i. e. the *Meſſiah*, was ſhortly to come.

THE ſeveral Courſes of the Prieſts begun on the Sabbath-Day, and continued to ſerve till the Sabbath following; but, becauſe they were now increaſed to a greater Number (*Joſephus* tells us, that there was no leſs than a thouſand in each Courſe) there were ſeveral Parts of the prieſtly Office (whereof burning of Incenſe was one) which the Courſe, that then

then miniſtered, ſeems to have divided among themſelves, for the Week that they were to attend.

A *JEWISH* Congregation, for the moſt Part, conſiſted of all the Prieſts of the Courſe which was then in waiting, of the *Levites*, and of certain ſtationary Men, as they called them, who repreſented the Body of the People, beſides ſome other accidental Worſhippers; and when the Prieſt went into the Sanctuary, or within the firſt Veil, to offer Incenſe, Notice was given by the Sound of a Bell, that it was then the Time of Prayer, whereupon every one preſent offered up his Supplications to God ſilently: And though this ſilent Prayer was not commanded, yet there ſeems a manifeſt Alluſion to it, in thoſe Words of St. *John*, where, *at the offering of Incenſe with the Prayers of the Saints*, 'tis ſaid, *there was Silence in Heaven for half an Hour*, Rev. viii. 1, *&c.* Nor is that Paſſage in *Eccleſiaſticus*, ch. l. 19, 20. any bad Repreſentation of this Part of the *Jewiſh* Worſhip, *And the People beſought the Lord, the moſt high, by Prayer, before him that is merciful, till the Solemnity of the Lord was ended; and then he went down* (viz. *Simon* the High-prieſt) *and lifted up his Hands over the whole Congregation of the Children of* Iſrael, *to give the Bleſſing of the Lord with his Lips.*

THE *Jews* had a peculiar Notion, that ſuch like Apparitions as appeared to *Zacharias* in the Temple, were always fatal to thoſe that had them, and a ſure Token of their inſtantaneous Death, *Gen.* xvi. 13, 22, 30. *Exod.* xx. 19, *&c.* but if this were true, it is natural for Men to be affrightened at ſudden and unuſual Things, eſpecially at any divine Appearance, whether of God himſelf taking a viſible Shape, or authorizing an Angel to do ſo. For though God does not make the Appearances to affrighten us, yet ſuch is the Imbecillity of our Nature, that we cannot but be ſtartled at them; and Reaſon good there is, that God, by this Means, ſhould both declare his own Glory and Majeſty, and humble his poor Creatures,

Creatures, in order to make them more ſuſceptible of his divine Revelation.

THE Word *Meſſiah* is derived from the *Hebrew Maſhach*, to *anoint*, and is the very ſame with *anointed* in *Greek*. It is a Name ſometimes given to the Kings and High-prieſts of the *Hebrews*, 1 *Sam.* xii. 5, *&c. Pſal.* cv. 15. but principally, and by way of Eminency, it belongs to that ſovereign Deliverer, who was expected by the *Jews*, and whom they vainly expect, even to this Day, ſince he is already come at the appointed Time, in the Perſon of our Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*. The *Jews* were uſed to anoint Kings, High-prieſts and ſometimes Prophets. *Saul*, *David*, *Solomon*, and *Joaſh*, Kings of *Judah*, received the royal Unction; *Aaron* and his Sons received the ſacerdotal; and *Eliſha* received the prophetical, at leaſt God ordered *Elijah* to give it to him. But now, though *Jeſus Chriſt* united in his own Perſon, all the Offices of Prophet, Prieſt and King, yet we no where find, that he received any outward or ſenſible Unction; and therefore the Unction, which the Prophets and Apoſtles ſpeak of, with regard to him, is the ſpiritual and internal Unction of Grace and the Holy Ghoſt, of which the outward Unction was no more than a Figure and Symbol.

THE Words of *Zacharias* to the Angel are, *Whereby ſhall I know this? For I am an old Man, and my Wife well ſtricken in Years*, Luke i. 18. much of the ſame Import with thoſe of *Abraham*, upon a like Occaſion, *Whereby ſhall I know that I ſhall inherit the Land of* Canaan? *Gen.* xviii. 8. How then came it to paſs that *Abraham* was gratified with a Sign on the ſame Requeſt, for which *Zacharias* was puniſhed with Blindneſs? Now, though there may be a great Similitude in the Words, which are ſpoken by ſeveral Perſons, yet there may, at the ſame Time, be a very conſiderable Difference in the Heart and Habit of Mind, from whence they proceed, which we muſt allow

allow God can ſee much better than we can perceive by Words. In relation to *Abraham* then, the Holy Spirit bears him Teſtimony, that *he ſtaggered not at the Promiſe through Unbelief, but was ſtrong in Faith, giving Glory to God, being fully perſuaded, that what he had promiſed he was able to perform*, Rom. iv. 19. and therefore if he aſked a Sign, it was not to beget, but to nouriſh and confirm this Faith in him. But in *Zacharias* the aſking of a Sign favoured of perfect Infidelity, in that he believed not an Angel, appearing to him in the Name of the Lord, and in a Place where evil Angels durſt not come: An Angel telling him *his Prayers were heard*, which evil Angels could not know; and acquainted him with Things that tended to the Glory of God, the Completion of his Promiſes, and the Welfare of Mankind, which evil Angels would not do. His Puniſhment therefore was the juſt Reſult of his Unbelief; but (what ſhews the Mercy of God in inflicting it) it was a Puniſhment of ſuch a Nature, as carried with it an Anſwer to his Deſire, being no more than a Privation of Speech, until the Words of the Angel were fulfilled.

LET us now proceed in our Narrative. Six Months after *Elizabeth*'s Conception, the ſame Angel *Gabriel* was ſent to *Nazareth*, a City of *Galilee*, to a Virgin, named *Mary*, a near Relation to *Elizabeth*, and of the Houſe of *David*, who had lately been eſpouſed to one *Joſeph*, a Perſon of the ſame Pedigree, indeed, but of nó higher Profeſſion than that of a Carpenter. The Angel approaching the pious Maid, began to congratulate her with *being highly in the Favour of God, and bleſſed above all the reſt of her Sex, becauſe ſhe ſhould have the Happineſs of bearing a Son, called by the Name of* Jeſus *or* Saviour, *the long expected* Meſſiah, *to whom God would give the Throne of his Father* David, *and of whoſe Sovereignty and Dominion there ſhould be no End.*

CONSCIOUS of her own Virtue, and yet ſurprized at this uncommon Appearance and Salutation, the

holy Virgin began to expoſtulate with the heavenly Meſſenger, the Poſſibility of the Thing, ſince ſhe had all along lived in a ſtrict State of Virginity: But the Angel, to ſatisfy her in this Particular, told her, *That this wonderful Work was to be effected by the inviſible Power and Operation of the* Holy Ghoſt: *and to ſhew her that nothing was impoſſible to the Almighty, gave her to underſtand, that her Couſin* Elizabeth *(notwithſtanding her old Age, and former Sterility) had been now ſix Months with Child:* Whereupon the holy Virgin humbly acquieſced in whatever God had determined to do with her, and as ſoon as the Angel was departed, made Preparations for her Journey to *Hebron*, where her Couſin *Elizabeth* lived.

As ſoon as ſhe arrived at *Zacharias*'s Houſe, *Elizabeth*, upon hearing her firſt Salutation, perceived that the Child ſprang in her Womb, and being inſpired with the *Holy Ghoſt*, ſhe cried out, *Bleſſed art thou above thy Sex! Bleſſed is the Fruit of thy Body! And how great is my Felicity to be viſited by the Mother of my Lord!* And having, by the ſame prophetic Spirit, aſſured *Mary* of the Accompliſhment of every Thing that the Angel had told her, ſhe ſo tranſported the bleſſed Virgin, that ſhe broke out into a Rapture of Thankſgiving to God, wherein ſhe recounted his Mercies, and the Promiſes which he had made to the People of *Iſrael*, and which, by making her the bleſſed Inſtrument of them, he was now about to fulfill.

THAT we may rightly underſtand every Particular as we go on, let us conſider the following Obſervations.

NAZARETH was a City of the *Lower Galilee*, ſituated in the South Part of that Province, and ſo not far from the Confines of *Samaria* to the South, and nearer to the Territories of *Tyre* and *Sidon* to the North-weſt. According to Mr. *Maundrell*'s Account, in his Journey from *Aleppo*, it is at preſent only an inconſiderable Village, lying in a Kind of a round concave

concave Valley, on the Top of an high Hill. Here is a Convent built over (what is ſaid to be) the Place of the Annunciation, or where the bleſſed Virgin received the joyful Meſſage brought her by the Angel. Here is likewiſe the Houſe of *Joſeph*, the very ſame (as the Friars of the Convent tell you) wherein the Son of God lived for near thirty Years in Subjection to Man; and not far from hence, they ſhew you the Synagogue wherein our bleſſed Saviour preached that Sermon, *Luke* iv. 16. whereby his Countrymen were ſo exaſperated, that they *roſe up and thruſt him out of the City*, and led him to the Brow of the Hill, whereon their City was built, *that they might caſt him down headlong*, Luke iv. 28, 29. for which Reaſon that Brow is, to this Day, called the *Mountain of Precipitation*.

TO a Virgin eſpouſed to a Man, whoſe Name was Joſeph, *of the Houſe of* David; which Words, in my Opinion, might be placed in this Manner,——*To a Virgin of the Houſe of* David; *eſpouſed to a Man, whoſe Name was* Joſeph, *and the Virgin's Name was* Mary; becauſe this agrees better with the Words of the Angel, *The Lord God ſhall give him the Throne of his Father* David. For, ſince the Angel had plainly told the Virgin, that ſhe ſhould have this Son without the Knowledge of any Man, it was not *Joſeph*'s, but *Mary*'s being of the Houſe of *David*, that made *David* his Father. Of her immediate Parents, however, the Scripture tells us nothing, not ſo much as their Names; but from Tradition we learn, that ſhe was the Daughter of *Joachim* and *Anna*, of the royal Tribe of *Judah*, and yet related to the Race of *Aaron*, becauſe *Elizabeth*, the Wife of *Zacharias*, was her Couſin.

ESPOUSING or betrothing was nothing elſe but a ſolemn Promiſe of Marriage, made by two Perſons, to each other, at ſuch a Diſtance of Time as they agreed upon. The Manner of performing this Eſpouſal was either by a Writing, or by a Piece

of Silver given to the Bride, or by Cohabitation. The Writing that was prepared on theſe Occaſions, ran in this Form: *On ſuch a Day of ſuch a Month, in ſuch a Year,* A, *the Son of* A, *has ſaid to* B, *the Daughter of* B, *Be thou my Spouſe, according to the Law of* Moſes *and the* Iſraelites, *and I will give thee, for the Portion of Virginity, the Sum of two hundred* Zuzims, *as it is ordained by the Law. And the ſaid* B *has conſented to become his Spouſe upon theſe Conditions, which the ſaid* A *has promiſed to perform upon the Day of Marriage. To this the ſaid* A *obliges himſelf; and for this he engages all his Goods, even as far as the Cloak which he wears upon his Shoulder. Moreover he promiſes to perform all that is intended in Contracts of Marriage, in Favour of the* Iſraelitiſh *Women. Witneſſes,* A, B, C. The Promiſe by a Piece of Silver, and without Writing, was made before Witneſs; when the young Man ſaid to his Miſtreſs, *Receive this Piece of Silver as a Pledge that you ſhall become my Spouſe.* Laſtly, the Engagement by Cohabitation (according to the *Rabbins*) was allowed by Law, *Deut.* xxiv. 1. but it had been wiſely forbidden by the Antients, becauſe of the Abuſes that might happen, and to prevent the Inconvenience of clandeſtine Marriages. After ſuch Eſpouſal was made, (which was generally when the Parties were young) the Woman continued with her Parents ſeveral Months, if not ſome Years (at leaſt till ſhe was arrived at the Age of *Puberty*) before ſhe was brought home, and her Marriage conſummated: For ſo we find that *Sampſon*'s Wife remained with her Parents a conſiderable Time after Eſpouſal, *Judg.* xiv. 15. and that the bleſſed Virgin was diſcernibly with Child before ſhe and her intended Huſband came together, *Matth.* i. 18. Whether this Method of betrothing was at firſt ordained, or only approved by God, *Deut.* xx. 7. or whether it be now of any Obligation to us *Chriſtians*, we ſhall not pretend to determine. It is certain that it has nothing that is typical, nothing of

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the carnal Ordinance in it, but ſomething very proper and convenient, *viz.* that the Parties contracted may have ſome intermediate Time to think ſeriouſly of the great Change they are going to make in their Condition; to diſcourſe more freely together about their domeſtick Affairs; and to implore God's Bleſſing and Protection over them and theirs, in all the Changes and Chances of this mortal Life.

WE read of but few Inſtances in Scripture, where Men had Names determined for them, by particular Appointment from Heaven, and before the Time of their Birth, as was that of our Saviour *Jeſus*; and as ſuch Names appear to be very ſignificant, ſo the Perſons, diſtinguiſhed by them, were always remarkable for ſome extraordinary Qualities or Events, which their reſpective Names were deſigned to denote. Our Lord's Name, indeed, in Senſe and Subſtance, is the ſame with *Joſhua*, that famous Leader heretofore, who after the Death of *Moſes* ſettled the *Iſraelites* in the Promiſed Land, and ſubdued the Enemies that oppoſed their Entrance into it. But as that earthly was a Figure of the heavenly *Canaan*, ſo was the Captain of *That*, an eminent Type of our Salvation; and, if he was worthy to be called a Saviour, much more is this *Jeſus*, what his Name imports; for he delivers us from the heavieſt of all Bondages, and from the moſt formidable of all Enemies, as he, and he only it is, who ſaves his People from their Sins.

THE Prophets, in their Predictions, are very full and expreſs, that the *Meſſiah* ſhould be a great King, and deſcend from the Line of *David*; ſee *Pſal.* xi. 7. *Iſaiah* ix. 6, 7. *Dan.* vii. 14. and *Ezek.* xx. 27. and therefore the Angel, in his Meſſage to *Mary*, characteriſes him, as a Succeſſor to that Prince's Throne, and ſeems to accommodate himſelf, in ſome Meaſure, to the Prejudice of the *Jews*, and perhaps of the Virgin-Mother herſelf, who being bred up in the *Synagogue*, might expect that the

Meſſiah

Meſſiah ſhould be a temporal Prince, as well as they. But our Lord's *Kingdom* (as himſelf plainly declares) *is not of this World*, nor of the like Nature with other Empires upon Earth. His Reign is in the Hearts and Minds of Men; and his Dominion is in the Church, againſt which *the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail*, and in which, *of the Increaſe of his Government and Peace there ſhall be no End*, Iſaiah ix. 7. *until the End cometh, when he ſhall deliver up the Kingdom to God, even the Father*, 1 Cor. xv. 24.

MARY's Expoſtulation is, *How ſhall this be, ſeeing I know not Man?* Which ſome look upon as no more than a Reply of Admiration, and a Deſire to be farther informed in what Manner God intended to effect ſuch a wonderful Work; though others perceive in them ſome Indications of Diffidence, but that might be the more excuſable, becauſe there had been no ſuch Precedent of the Divine Power made in the World, as to cauſe a *Virgin to conceive and bring forth a Son.*

SOME are of Opinion, that *Mary*, very early in her Life, had made a Vow of perpetual Chaſtity, and that *Joſeph* was appointed her Huſband, not to live with her in the ordinary Uſe of Marriage, but meerly, to be the Guardian of her Virginity: But beſides that, no Vows of perpetual Virginity were ever in Uſe among the *Jews*, it can hardly be ſuppoſed that a *Jewiſh* Woman, in whom Barrenneſs was reputed a Reproach, and looked upon as a Curſe, would be ever induced to make one. Among the Precepts of the Law, the *Jewiſh* Doctors account Matrimony to be one, *Gen.* i. 28. from which none are exempted, but they, who devout themſelves wholly to the Study of the Law: but, ſince this was not the Bleſſed Virgin's Caſe, it reflects a Diſhonour upon her Memory to imagine, that after ſhe had entered into ſuch a Vow, ſhe ſhould admit of an Eſpouſal to *Joſeph*, which could be for no other End but meerly to mock him.

THE Holy Ghoſt ſhall come upon thee, and the Power of the Higheſt ſhall overſhadow thee, wherein, according to the uſual Modeſty of Scripture Language, is implied all that Action of the Holy Ghoſt, whereby the Bleſſed Virgin was enabled to become fruitful, and the Place of ordinary Generation was, in this Caſe, ſupplied. Now when this Action is in the Scripture repreſented as intirely the Work of God, and yet is attributed to the Holy Ghoſt in particular, we are not to underſtand it ſo peculiarly his, that the two other Perſons, ſubſiſting in the Godhead, ſhould have no Concern in it; for here that Rule of the Schools takes Place, that the entire Union of the Divine Nature makes all ſuch Actions common to all three, as do not refer to the Properties and Relations, by which they ſtand diſtinguiſhed from each other. As therefore the Holy Spirit began the firſt Creation by moving (or brooding as it were) upon the Face of the Waters, ſo did he here begin the new Creation, by conveying a Principle, or Power of Fruitfulneſs into a Perſon, otherwiſe incapable of it: And yet, as there, without the Father and his divine Word, or Son, *not any Thing was made, that was made*, John i. 3. ſo did he here bring this ſecond, *this Creation of a new Thing*, Jer. xxxi. 22. to Effect, by the ſame Co-operation of the whole undivided Trinity, as he had done the former.

HEBRON very probably was the Place where *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth* lived, and where *John the Baptiſt* was born, becauſe it was not only one of the Cities appointed for the Prieſts to dwell in, *Joſh.* xx. 7. but ſituated likewiſe in Mountains, which running croſs the Middle of *Judea* from South to North, gave to the Tract, which they run along, the Name of the *Hill-Country*. *Hebron* was ten Leagues diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, and about forty from *Nazareth*, which made it a long Journey for the Bleſſed Virgin, had not her Zeal to go and partake in her Couſin's Joy (more than to ſatisfy her Curioſity, whether

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what the Angel had told her was true) made her ſurmount all Difficulties.

IT is ſaid, indeed, of the *Baptiſt*, that he *ſhould be filled with the Holy Ghoſt from his Mother's Womb*; and from hence ſome have thought, that this extraordinary Motion of the Child in *Elizabeth*, was an Act of his own, and proceeded from a Senſation of Joy, which himſelf felt at the Salutation of the Bleſſed Virgin: But, beſides that, *being filled with the Holy Ghoſt from his Mother's Womb*, means no more than that the Power of the Holy Ghoſt ſhould be diſcerned to be upon him very early. It is certain, that Infants in the Womb are not capable of any Joy themſelves, as having no Apprehenſions of Good to be enjoyed, or Evil to be avoided; but as they are ſenſibly affected with the Joy, or Grief, or Surprize of the Parent, to whom they are united, the uncommon Motion of the Child, at this Conjuncture, muſt be occaſioned by the Joy which tranſported his Mother.

It was cuſtomary among the *Jews*, for pious and devout Perſons, when they found themſelves inſpired, upon great and ſolemn Occaſions to celebrate the Praiſes of God, in Songs made on purpoſe. Several of this Kind we meet with in the *Old Teſtament*, but this of the Bleſſed Virgin is the firſt that occurs in the *New*, and for the Majeſty of its Stile, the Nobleneſs of its Sentiments, and that Spirit of Piety, which runs through the whole, is inferior to none.

ABOUT three Months *Mary* continued with her Couſin *Elizabeth*, and then returned home. *Elizabeth*, not long after, was delivered of a Son; but on the eighth Day, when the Child was to be circumciſed and named, his Relations and Friends were not a little ſurprized to hear that he was to be called *John*, ſince none of the Family bore that Name; but their Surprize became much greater, when they found, that upon this Occaſion, his Father's Speech was immediately reſtored to him, which he employed in the

the Praiſes of Almighty God, who had wrought ſuch Prodigies among them.

THE Holy Virgin being returned to *Nazareth*, ſtill concealed the Myſtery, which God had wrought in her, from her eſpouſed Huſband, but her pregnant Symptoms ſoon diſcovered it; and, though her Deportment had been extreamly chaſte and modeſt, yet he might be well aſſured that ſhe was with Child. This raiſed no little Concern in his Breaſt; but, being a merciful good Man, and unwilling, either to expoſe the Honour of her Family, which he thought ſhe had ſtained, or to inflict publick Puniſhment upon her, according to the Sentence of the Law, he reſolved upon a Separation with the utmoſt Privacy: But before he came to put it in Execution, an Angel from Heaven appeared to him in a Viſion, informing him, *That his Wife's Conception was the immediate Work of the Holy Ghoſt, and that ſhe ſhould bear a Son, the ſame Perſon whom the Prophet had foretold under the Name of* Emanuel, *or* God with us. Whereupon *Joſeph* was not diſobedient to the heavenly Viſion, but taking the Holy Virgin Home to him, he lived with her, to all outward Appearance, in conjugal Love, though he certainly had no carnal Knowledge of her, till ſhe was delivered of her Firſt-born Son, who, by a lineal Deſcent, was true Heir to the Kingdom of *Iſrael*, as ſprung from the Houſe of *David*.

THE *Jews* had a poſitive Command in their Law, that no Child ſhould be circumciſed before the eighth Day, becauſe the Mother, for ſeven Days was reputed unclean, and ſo was the Child by touching her, *Levit.* xii. 1, 2. but the Law appointed no certain Place, in which Circumciſion was to be done, nor any certain Perſon that was to perform it; neither did it injoin that the Child ſhould have his Name given him at that Time, only the Cuſtom prevailed of doing it then, becauſe, when God inſtituted the Rite, he changed the Names of *Abraham* and *Sarah*.

THE *Jews*, from the firſt Beginning, ſeem to have made it a Point of Religion, to give ſuch Names to their Children, as were very ſignificative either of God's Mercy to them, or of their Duty to God; and from the Paſſage now before us (though it was no antient Uſage) it ſeems to be a Cuſtom introduced, at leaſt in the Days of *Zacharias*, to call Children by the Name of their Parents, or the neareſt Relations (as it is uſual now among us) if there was no particular Reaſon to the contrary.

THE Words in the Text, as we tranſlate them, are,——Joſeph *her Huſband being a juſt Man*: But if he was a juſt Man, and was ſatisfied that his intended Wife had, ſome way or other, violated her Chaſtity (as he knew nothing to the contrary at that Time) inſtead of ſcreening her Crime, he ought to have brought her to Puniſhment, *Deut.* xxii. 20, 21. Now it is to be obſerved, that upon the Diſcovery of his Wife's Pregnancy, *Joſeph* had the Choice of three Things; 1ſt, Either he might, notwithſtanding this, have taken her to his Houſe, as his Wife, becauſe the Law of Divorce laid none under an Obligation, but gave a Permiſſion only, in Caſe of ſome diſcovered Uncleanneſs, to put away the Wife: Or 2dly, He might give her a Bill of Divorcement, either in public or in private, (for that was left to his Option) either before two or three Witneſſes, or before a proper Magiſtrate, and that without ſpecifying any Crime againſt her: Or 3dly, He might, according to the Law, have brought her upon her Trial, whether, in the Matter of her Pregnancy, ſhe had ſuffered a Rape, or was herſelf conſenting, *Deut.* xxii. 23, 24. Had therefore *Joſeph* done the firſt of theſe, he muſt have acted contrary to his own Honour, and have incurred the common Reproach, that he, *who retained an Adultereſs, is a Fool.* Had he done the laſt of theſe, he was not ſure of convicting her, becauſe, upon Examination, it might appear that ſhe had been forced; and, in that Caſe,

Caſe, the Man that did it was to die, *Deut.* xxii. 25. or ſhe might have been with Child before her betrothing, and, in that Caſe, ſhe was only obliged to marry the Perſon that had abuſed her, Verſe 28, 29. Upon the whole, therefore, *Joſeph* thought it the beſt and juſteſt Way to proceed upon the Foot of a Divorce. *Mary*'s being viſibly with Child, was Reaſon ſufficient to authorize his parting with her: but he did not know for certain, that ſhe was guilty of Adultery, or that conſequently ſhe deſerved to die; and therefore he did not think it right, by bringing her upon her Trial, to expoſe her.

THE common Way of Separation among the *Jews* was, by the Man's giving the Woman a Letter of Divorce. This, in their Language, is called *Gheth*, and the Subſtance of it is to this Effect. *On ſuch a Day, Month, and Year, and at ſuch a Place, I* A, *divorce you voluntarily, put you away, and reſtore you to your Liberty, even you* B, *who was heretofore my Wife, and I permit you to marry whom you pleaſe.* When the Day of Divorce comes, the *Rabbi*, that attends, having ſtrictly examined both Parties, and finding that they are reſolved to part, bids the Woman open her Hands, and when ſhe has received the Deed, cloſe them both together, leſt it ſhould chance to fall to the Ground. The Man, when he gives her the Parchment (for on Parchment the Bill of Divorce was to be wrote in the Preſence of two *Rabbins*, and with many other trifling Circumſtances) tells her, *Here is thy Divorce; I put thee away from me, and leave thee at liberty to marry whom thou pleaſeſt*; and when the Woman has taken it, and the *Rabbi* read it over once more, ſhe is intirely free. There is in this Ceremony, however, to be remarked, that they always endeavour to have ten or twelve Perſons at it, beſides the two Witneſſes, who ſign the Deed. When therefore *Joſeph* intended to diſmiſs *Mary* privately, it could not be by having no Witneſſes at all, but as few as the Nature of the

Thing would bear, and by giving her the Letter of Divorcement into her own Hand, which ſhe might ſuppreſs, if ſhe thought fit, or by inſerting no Accuſation againſt her in it, in Caſe it came to be read before the Company.

THIS Viſion was in a Dream, and while he was aſleep, and Dreams, we know, was one Way whereby God revealed his Mind to People formerly, *Job* xxxiv. 14, 15. whereby he made himſelf known to the Prophets, *Numb.* xii. 6. and not to Prophets only, but to Pagan Princes ſometimes, as appears by the Inſtances both of *Pharaoh* and *Nebuchadnezzar*, *Gen.* xli. 1. *Dan.* ii. 1. But how to diſtinguiſh divine from natural Dreams, it is difficult to ſay, unleſs it be by the clear and diſtinct Series of their Repreſentation, and the forceable Impreſſion which they leave upon Mens Spirits; whereas natural Dreams, for the moſt part, are rambling and inconſiſtent, and *whoſo regardeth them* (ſays the wiſe Son of *Sirach*) *is like him who catcheth at a Shadow, or followeth after the Wind*, Eccleſ. xxxiv. 2.

THE Word firſt-born, in Scripture, admits of various Significations: Sometimes (and moſt commonly indeed) it denotes the eldeſt of two or more Children, as *Eliab* is called the Firſt-born of *Jeſſe*, 1 *Sam.* xvii. 13. at others, the firſt that is born, without Regard to any elſe; as when God ſays to *Moſes*, *Sanctify me all the Firſt-born*, Exod. xiii. 2. In ſome Places it imports figuratively what is moſt dearly beloved by us; in which Senſe God frequently calls the *Iſraelites* his Firſt-born; and in others, what is moſt remarkable for Greatneſs or Excellency, as God promiſes *David* (who was but a younger Brother of the Family) to make him the Firſt-born of the Kings of the Earth, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 28. In any of theſe three laſt Senſes our Saviour might very properly be called his Mother's firſt-born Son, for as much as he was really her firſt Child; her moſt, and only beloved, and the moſt illuſtrious of his Race:

But

But then *Joſeph*'s not knowing his Wife until ſhe was delivered of her firſt-born Son, ſeems to imply, that he knew her afterwards. Thoſe who maintain the perpetual Virginity of the Bleſſed Mother, tells us, that the *Greek* words which we render until, in ſeveral Places of Scripture, has Relation only to the Time which precedes, and not to that which follows any Event; ſo that he knew her not until, may be taken in the ſame Senſe, as *Samuel* came not to ſee *Saul* till the Day of his Death, 1 *Sam.* xv. 35. *i. e.* he never came to ſee him: But (beſides that moſt of the Paſſages, which are produced to this Purpoſe, are far from coming up to the Caſe in Hand) ſince the Angel commanded *Joſeph* to take *Mary* as his Wife, without any Intimation, that he ſhould not perform the Duty of an Huſband to her, it is not eaſy to conceive, why he ſhould live twelve Years with her, and all that while deny that Duty, which both the Law and the Canons of the *Jews* command the Huſband to pay his Wife, *Exod.* xxi. 10. If we imagine, that our Saviour would have been diſhonoured in any other's lying in the ſame Bed after him, we ſeem to forget, how much he humbled and debaſed himſelf, in lying in that Bed firſt, and then in a Stable, and a Manger. But, leaving this Queſtion to thoſe, who affect to be curious beyond what is written, we may ſafely conclude with St. *Baſil*,——*That, though it was neceſſary for the Completion of the Prophecy, that the Mother of our Lord ſhould continue a Virgin, until ſhe had brought forth her Firſt-born; yet, what ſhe was afterwards, 'tis idle to diſcuſs, becauſe it is no manner of Concern to the Myſtery.*

BUT let us proceed in our Hiſtory. Some Time before the Birth of *Chriſt*, *Auguſtus Cæſar* had iſſued out a general Edict, that all Perſons in the *Roman* Empire, with their Eſtates and Conditions, ſhould be regiſtered at certain appointed Places, according to their reſpective Provinces, Cities and Families. By Virtue of this Edict, *Joſeph* and his Wife *Mary*, being

being both of the Tribe of *Judah*, and Family of *David*, were obliged to go as far as *Bethlehem*, which was the Mother-City of their Tribe, there to have their Names and Eſtates enrolled. The great Conflux of People, upon this Occaſion, had already filled all the Inns, and Houſes of Reception, ſo that no better Place could be found for their Lodging, than a Stable, where they had not been long, before the Bleſſed Virgin was delivered of a Son, whom (herſelf performing the Office of a Midwife) ſhe bound in ſwaddling Clothes, and laid down to reſt in a Manger. But, notwithſtanding this Obſcurity of our Saviour's Birth, God was pleaſed, that very Night, by the Meſſage of an Angel, with a radiant Light ſurrounding him, to make a pompous Revelation of it to certain poor Shepherds, who were attending their Flocks on the Plains of *Bethlehem*; and, after one Angel had delivered the joyful Tydings, an innumerable Company of the ſame celeſtial Choir, broke out all together into this triumphant Doxology, *Glory be to God on high, Peace on Earth, and Good-will towards Men.*

No ſooner was this heavenly Concert ended, but the over-joyed Shepherds, remembering the Signs which the Angel, before he diſappeared, had given them, immediately haſtened to *Bethlehem*, where they found the Virgin Mother, and *Joſeph* the ſuppoſed Father, attending the god-like Babe, whom, in humble Reverence, they adored, and then returned, praiſing and extolling the Mercies of God, and, to the great Amazement of all that heard them, publiſhing, in all Places, what they knew concerning this Child.

THE following Notes will explain what is difficult in the preceding Relation.

BETHLEHEM, where our Saviour was born (for there was another City of the ſame Name in the Tribe of *Zabulon*) is ſituate on the Declivity of an Hill, in the Tribe of *Judah*, two Leagues diſtant from

from *Jeruſalem*, and near thirty from *Nazareth*; ſo that we might juſtly wonder, how the Bleſſed Virgin, big with Child as ſhe was, could be able to take ſo long a Journey on Foot (for we hear of no other Voiture that ſhe had) were it not preſumable, that the Child, which ſhe conceived without Loſs of her Virginity, ſhe might be enabled to carry without the Senſe of any Load, or Uneaſineſs. What might poſſibly be the Motive of her taking ſuch a Journey, is not ſo well accounted for, by pretending that ſhe was an Heireſs, and the ſole Relict of her Family, which, upon this Occaſion, ſhe was obliged to repreſent; as it is by ſaying, that this was done by the eſpecial Providence and Appointment of God, who ordered this *Enrolment* (which *Auguſtus* intended to have had done before) to be delayed to this very Time, and then inſtigated the Bleſſed Virgin to accompany her Huſband, that ſo Chriſt might be born in *Bethlehem*, according to the Prediction of the Prophet, *Micah* v. 2. and that his Lineage and Family might, at that Time, be known and preſerved in the publick Tables. The Birth indeed of our Bleſſed Saviour (more than its Extent or Riches) has made *Bethlehem*, ever ſince, a Place of high Renown, which is generally viſited by Pilgrims, and at preſent is furniſhed not only with a Convent of the *Latins*, but alſo with one of the *Greeks*, and another of the *Armenians*. Here are ſhewn you the very Place where our Saviour was born, the Manger in which he was laid, and the Cave or Grott in which the Bleſſed Virgin hid herſelf, and her Divine Babe, from the Malice of *Herod*, for ſome Time, before their Departure into *Egypt*. Here are ſhewn you likewiſe the Chapel of St. *Joſeph*, the ſuppoſed Father of our Lord; the Chapel of the *Innocents*, as alſo thoſe of St. *Jerom*, St. *Paula*, and *Euſtochium*. About half a Mile Eaſtward from the Town, you ſee the Field where the Shepherds were watching their Flocks, when they received the glad Tidings

of

of the Birth of *Chriſt*, and, not far from the Field, the Village where they dwelt.

THE Inns in the *Eaſt* are, even to this Day, large ſquare Buildings, but generally no more than one Story high, with a ſpacious Court in the middle of them. Into this Court you enter in at a wide Gate, and, on the Right and Left-hand, meet with Rooms, that are appointed for Travellers to lodge in: Thoſe that come firſt take the Rooms they like beſt, but muſt be mindful to provide themſelves both with Bedding and Victuals, becauſe the Rooms are perfectly naked, and have no Furniture in them. 'Tis ſome Comfort however, that, for this Lodging (ſuch as it is) you'll pay nothing, only a ſmall Toll to the Town, as you paſs along; and have no Reaſon to fear the Loſs of any Thing you bring with you, becauſe the Maſter of the Inn takes great Care of the Gate at Night, and is indeed reſponſible for the Safety of whatever Baggage you carry into your Lodging.

THE Office of Midwife, which the holy Virgin herſelf performed, ſhe could not have done, to be ſure, had ſhe been delivered in the common Manner of other Women: But it was always the Opinion of the Church from the Days of *Gregory Nazianzen*, until now (though before his Days there were ſome Opinions to the contrary) that, as there was no Sin in the Conception, ſo neither had the Virgin any Pains in the Production; for to her alone the Puniſhment of *Eve*, that *in Sorrow ſhe ſhould bring forth Children*, did not extend, becauſe where nothing of Sin was the Ingredient, there nothing of Miſery could cohabit.

LET us now go on with our Narrative. As ſoon as the Child was eight Days old, his Parents had him circumciſed according to the Law; when, purſuant to the Order which the Angel had given before his Conception, they called his Name *JESUS*; and, as ſoon as he was forty Days old, two other

Ceremonies

Ceremonies were performed, *viz.* the Purification of his Mother, and the Preſentation of her Firſt-born. Though therefore her Son's immaculate Conception needed not that Ceremony, yet the holy Virgin went up with *Joſeph* to *Jeruſalem*, there to offer the Sacrifices preſcribed by the Law for her Purification, and there to preſent her Son to the Lord, by delivering him into the Prieſt's Hands, and redeeming him again for five Shekels. But while ſhe was in the Temple performing this, old *Simeon*, who had long waited for the Redemption of *Iſrael*, and had been promiſed, by the Mouth of Heaven, that he ſhould not leave this World, before he had ſeen the illuſtrious Perſon who was to effect it, came in, and taking the bleſſed Infant in his Arms, in an heavenly Extaſy praiſed God for the Completion of his Promiſes, in letting him live to ſee the Saviour of the World, before he quitted it: And, no ſooner had he ended his divine Rapture, but an ancient Widow of the Tribe of *Aſer*, whoſe Name was *Anna*, and whoſe Piety and Devotion, Severity of Life, and conſtant Frequentation of the publick Worſhip, were very remarkable, coming into the Temple, and being herſelf likewiſe excited by a prophetick Spirit, gave God Thanks for his infinite Mercies; teſtifying that this Child was the true *Meſſiah*, and declaring the ſame to all ſuch devout Perſons in *Jeruſalem*, as waited for his Coming.

AFTER theſe legal Performances, and ſolemn Teſtimonies in Favour of the Child, *Joſeph* and *Mary* returned to *Bethlehem*, where, in a very ſhort Time, they were viſited by certain Strangers, coming from afar, of a Rank and Character ſomewhat extraordinary. For God, to notify the Birth of his Son to the *Gentiles*, as well as to the *Jews*, cauſed an uncommon *Star* to ariſe in the *Eaſt*, which ſome Wiſemen, or Aſtronomers, in thoſe Parts obſerving, and underſtanding withal, that this was to ſignify the Birth of the *Meſſiah* promiſed to the *Jews*, travelled

to the Metropolis of *Judea*, there enquiring after this new-born Prince, that they might teſtify their Homage and Adoration of him. Their publick Character and Appearance, and their openly calling him the *King of the Jews*, put *Herod* into a great Conſternation, and the whole City indeed into no ſmall Commotion, as both fearing, and hoping ſomething extraordinary.

HEROD, however, being reſolved to deſtroy this ſuppoſed Rival in his Kingdom, immediately aſſembled the whole Body of the *Sanhedrim*, and demanded of them the very Place, where the *Meſſiah* ſhould be born. *Bethlehem*, in the Land aſſigned to the Tribe of *Judah*, *they told him*, was the very Spot, which the Holy Spirit, by the Prophet *Micah*, had marked out for this great Event; which when he underſtood, he diſmiſſed the Aſſembly, and ſending for the above-mentioned Aſtrologers, with the utmoſt Secreſy, enquired of them the exact Time of the *Star's* firſt Appearance, and then diſmiſſed them to *Bethlehem*, with Orders, to make diligent Search for the young Prince, and, when they had diſcovered where he was, to bring him Word to *Jeruſalem*, that he, in like Manner, might go and pay him his Homage. But this Pretence of *Worſhipping*, was no more than a Cloak to his Intention of *Killing* the Child.

THESE Perſons however, having received the King's Inſtructions, departed towards *Bethlehem*, and, in their Way, were very agreeably ſurprized with a new Sight of the ſame miraculous Star, they had ſeen in their own Country, which went before them, and (like the *fiery Pillar* in the *Wilderneſs*) directed them to the very Houſe, where *Jeſus* and his Mother abode. As ſoon as they entered in, they fell proſtrate on the Ground, according to the *Eaſtern* Cuſtom, and, having in this Manner adored the Child, preſented him with the richeſt Products of

their

their Country, Gold, and precious Odours, more particularly Frankincenſe, and Myrrh.

HAVING thus performed their Homage and Congratulations, theſe *Eaſtern* Strangers were thinking of nothing more than to return to *Jeruſalem*, and acquaint *Herod* with the happy Diſcovery they had made; but God, who knew the Heart of that Tyrant, prevented them by a Viſion that very Night, which directed them into their own Country another Way; and, not long after, ſent an Angel to *Joſeph*, to acquaint him with *Herod*'s intended Cruelty againſt the Child, and to order him to retire into *Egypt*, with him, and his Mother, and there to continue, till farther Notice; which *Joſeph* inſtantly obeyed, and, for fear of Diſcovery, taking the Advantage of the Night, with all poſſible Speed ſet forward for *Egypt*.

IN the mean Time *Herod* waited impatiently for the Return of the *Eaſtern* Sages; but at length finding himſelf deluded, and his moſt ſecret and ſubtle Deſigns blaſted, he fell into a moſt violent Rage and Fury; and, having reſolved to effect by Cruelty what he had been diſappointed of doing by Policy, he ſent out his Soldiers, and made a bloody Maſſacre of all the Children in the City of *Bethlehem*, and the neighbouring Towns, that were two Years of Age, and under, including herein the whole Time, and more, that the *Wiſemen* had told him, and not doubting, but that, in this general Slaughter, he ſhould diſpatch the young Prince, whom he ſo much dreaded: But God had provided him with a ſafe Retreat. The Shrieks, however, of tender Mothers for their innocent Babes, and the Groans of expiring Infants, which, on this Occaſion filled the Skies, were inexpreſſible, and were one Reaſon, doubtleſs, why the divine Vengeance, not long after, overtook this Tyrant, and ſmote him with a ſtrange and terrible Diſtemper, which put an End to his wicked and brutal Life.

BEFORE his Death, he had, by *Will* (which in ſome meaſure *Auguſtus* confirmed) ſettled his Dominions upon his Sons, and his Siſter. *Archelaus* he had made his Succeſſor in that Part of his Kingdom which included *Judea*, *Idumea*, and *Samaria*: To *Philip* he had given *Auronitis*, *Trachonitis*, *Panea*, and *Batanea*: To *Herod Antipas*, *Galilee*, and *Peræa*; and to his Siſter *Salome*, ſome particular Cities, with a conſiderable Sum of Money. After his Death therefore, (which was notified to *Joſeph* by a Viſion) God ordered him to return, with the Child and his Mother, into the Land of *Iſrael*, which *Joſeph* readily obeyed; but when he arrived in *Judea*, hearing that *Archelaus* ſucceeded *Herod*, in that Part of the Country, and being apprehenſive that the Cruelty and Ambition of the Father might be entailed upon the Son, he feared to ſettle there; and therefore, being directed by God in another Viſion, he retired into the Dominions of his Brother *Herod Antipas*, in *Galilee*, to his former Habitation in *Nazareth*, where the ſtrange Occurrences of our Lord's Birth were not ſo well known. After this, we have no certain Account either of him, or his Parents only that they annually repaired with him to *Jeruſalem* at the Paſſover; and that, as his Body increaſed in Stature, ſo, more eſpecially, the Faculties of his Soul were enlarged, being highly repleniſhed with Wiſdom, and the Grace of God.

IN the mean time *Archelaus*, following the Steps of his Father, made himſelf ſo odious to the *Jews*, that the principal Men among them, joining with thoſe of *Samaria*, made a publick Complaint of him to *Auguſtus*, who, upon a full Hearing, both of his Crimes, and Vindication, deprived him of his Government, confiſcated all his Goods, baniſhed him to *Vienna*, a City in *Gaul*, and reduced his Dominions to the Form of a *Roman* Province, which, for ever after, was ruled by a Governor ſent from *Rome*, who was called by the Name of *Procurator*, but,

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in ſome Caſes, was ſubject to the Preſident, or Governor of *Syria*.

OUR bleſſed Lord, as he was the ſupreme Lawgiver of the World, was not, in Strictneſs, bound to the Obſervation of his own Law, nor did he ſtand in any Need of Circumciſion, conſidered as a Remedy againſt original Sin, becauſe, in his Incarnation, he had contracted no Pollution; but as he was made of a Woman, made under the Law, and came (as himſelf teſtifies, *Mat.* iii. 15.) to fulfil all Righteouſneſs, it became him to receive the Character, which diſtinguiſhed the *Jews* from all other Nations. Among the *Jews* indeed it was thought a Reproach to keep Company with Perſons, that were not circumciſed. *Thou wenteſt in to Men uncircumciſed, and didſt eat with them*, is the Accuſation, which they brought againſt St. *Peter*, Acts xi. 3. and therefore, as our Lord was ſent chiefly to the loſt Sheep of *Iſrael*, he could not have been qualified for their Acceptance and free Converſation, had he not ſubmitted to this Ordinance. Of him was that moſt glorious of all the Promiſes made to *Abraham* intended, *In thy Seed ſhall all the Nations of the Earth be bleſſed*, Gal. iii. 16. And therefore fit it was, that he ſhould have the Seal or Teſtimony of Circumciſion, in Order to ſhew, that he was truly and rightly deſcended of that Anceſtor; and, as he was come to be the Mediator of a new and better Covenant, 'twas but decent, that the former ſhould recede with Honour, and that it might do ſo, himſelf ſhould approve of a Sacrament, which was both of divine Inſtitution, and a Means of Admiſſion into that former Covenant.

THE Law concerning the Purification of Women, we have in the twelfth Chapter of *Leviticus*, wherein it is ordained, that a Woman, after bearing of Children, ſhould continue, for a certain Number of Days, in a State, which the Law termed unclean. For the ſeven firſt Days, all Converſation or Con-

tact

tact polluted them, that approached her, and for three and thirty Days more (which in all amount to forty) ſhe was ſtill (though in an inferior Degree) reputed unclean; but, at the Expiration of this Term, if her Child was a Son (for the Time was double for a Daughter) ſhe was commanded to bring a Burnt-offering, and a Sin-offering, which wiped out the Stain, which the Law had laid upon her, and reſtored her to all the Purity and Privileges ſhe had before. Now tho' the miraculous Conception of the Bleſſed Virgin, ſet her quite above any Obligation to the Law of Impurity, yet ſince her being a Mother was ſufficiently notorious, though the Manner of her being ſo, was a Secret, 'twas fit, that ſhe ſhould ſubmit, as the known Mother of a Son, to the Ceremonies expected from her. Her Sin-offering was not indeed due in any Senſe, but ſhe lay under the ſame legal Incapacity, in the Eye of the World, as other Women did, and was to be reſtored to the Temple by it: Her Burnt-offering was not due, as that of other Parents is, to commemorate a Deliverance from Pangs and Dangers; but never ſure were Thanks ſo juſtly due for any Son, as this; never from any Mother, as from her, who had the Honour to bring forth her own, and the World's Saviour, the Bleſſing and Expectation of all the Earth. As therefore he was circumciſed in his own Perſon, though the myſtical and moral Part of Circumciſion had nothing to do with him: So his Mother ſubmitted to all the Purifications, of any other *Iſraelitiſh* Woman, though ſhe partook not in any Degree of the Infirmities, and Pollutions common to other Births.

WHAT the Bleſſed Virgin offered, we read, was a Pair of *Turtles*, which being the Oblation appointed only for the meaner Sort of People, *Lev.* xii. 6, 8. diſcovers the Poverty of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, that they could not reach to a Lamb of the firſt Year, the Offering

Offering, which they, who had Ability, were obliged to make.

SOME are of Opinion that this *Simeon* was the Son and Succeſſor of *Hillel*, a very famous Doctor in the *Jewiſh* Church, before our Saviour's Time, and that he was either the Father or Maſter of *Gamaliel*, at whoſe Feet St. *Paul* was educated. But beſides that we can hardly ſuppoſe, how a Perſon of this Note could make ſo publick a Declaration in Favour of our Lord, and yet no more Notice be taken of it; if we look into the ſeveral Revelations, which God, at this Time, was pleaſed to give of his Son, we ſhall find that none of them were directed to any of the *Phariſees*, or principal Doctors of the Law, but that to *Joſeph* a Carpenter, to *Zacharias* an ordinary Prieſt, and to a Company of poor Shepherds, ſuch Diſcoveries were made; and therefore it is much more reaſonable to preſume, that this *Simeon*, to whom God had revealed the Time of Chriſt's Coming, was ſome honeſt plain Man, more remarkable for his Piety and Devotion, than any other Quality or Accompliſhment. When he came into the Temple, 'tis ſaid, that among the other Mothers, who brought their Children to be preſented to the Lord, he obſerved the holy Virgin all ſhining with Rays of Light, and that, putting the Multitude aſide, he went directly to her, gave her his Bleſſing, took the Child *Jeſus* in his Arms, and, being divinely inſpired, pronounced the Canticle, *Nunc dimittis*. *Nicephorus* relates, that, as ſoon as he returned the Child to his Mother, he died; and *Epiphanius* adds, that the *Hebrew* Prieſts refuſed to give him Burial, becauſe he had ſpoken of our Saviour with too much Advantage. But theſe Traditions may be groundleſs Fictions.

WHEN they had performed all Things according to the Law of the Lord, they returned into Galilee, *to their own City* Nazareth, *Luke*. ii. 39. which muſt be interpreted of ſome Time at leaſt, after they had performed

performed theſe Things. For, upon Suppoſition, that the *Magians* came to *Bethlehem*, after that *Joſeph* and *Mary* had been at *Jeruſalem* with the Child; upon the Child's Return from thence, his Parents muſt have taken *Bethlehem* in their Way, and there made ſome ſmall Stay (in which Time we ſuppoſe that the *Wiſemen* came) before they departed to the Place of their ſettled Abode: Becauſe the other two Suppoſitions, *viz.* that the *Wiſemen* came to *Bethlehem* before the Preſentation of the Child at *Jeruſalem*, or that they came not till he was in the ſecond Year of his Age, when his Parents, upon ſome Buſineſs or other, happened to be at *Bethlehem*, are attended with more Difficulties, than can eaſily be ſurmounted.

HEROD, who was naturally of a jealous and ſuſpicious Temper, knew very well, that himſelf was hated by the *Jews*, and that the *Jews* were then in full Expectation of the *Meſſiah* (a Prince, that was to ſubdue all other Nations) to come and reign over them, and had therefore great Reaſon to fear, that this Rumour of a King's being born among them, confirmed by ſuch extraordinary Means, as Perſons coming from a far Country, and conducted to *Jeruſalem* by the Guidance of a wonderful Star, might be a Means to excite Sedition among the People, and occaſion perhaps a Revolution in the Government.

SOME, upon this Occaſion, are apt to wonder, why none of the *Jews* ſhould have the Curioſity to attend the *Wiſemen* in their Journey to *Bethlehem*; and the Reaſon, that is commonly aſſigned for their Omiſſion in this Reſpect, is the Dread they might have of offending the Tyrant, under whom they lived: But, as it is highly probable, that, when the *Wiſemen* came to *Jeruſalem*, they made their immediate Application to Court, as the moſt likely Place where to gain Intelligence of him, *that was born King of the* Jews; and as it is much to be queſtioned

queſtioned whether *Herod*, when he convened the Doctors of the Law made any Mention of the *Wiſemen*'s Coming, but nakedly propounded the Queſtion to them, *where Chriſt was to be born?* ſo there is great Reaſon to preſume, that he ſent them away ſo privately, that, if any of the *Jews* had been couragious enough to have gone along with them, they poſſibly might not have had an Opportunity. The greater Wonder of the two therefore is, that *Herod* ſhould ſend none, in whom he could confide, to be preſent at the Diſcovery of this rival Prince, and to bring him Word thereof, if not diſpatch him: But in this the Protection and Providence of God was viſible.

SOME of the Antients are of Opinion, that in the Preſents, which theſe *Eaſtern* Sages made, they had a myſtical Meaning, and deſigned to ſignify their Acknowledgment both of the Divinity, Royalty, and Humanity of our Bleſſed Saviour. For the Incenſe, ſay they, was proper to be given him, as a God; the Gold, as a King; and the Myrrh, as a mortal Man, whoſe Body was to be embalmed therewith. But all this is no more than the Sport of a luxuriant Fancy. 'Tis certain, that the *Eaſtern* People never came into the Preſence of their Princes, without ſome Preſents, and that their Preſents were uſually of the moſt choice Things, that their Country did afford. All that they meant therefore was to do Homage to a new born Prince of a neighbouring Nation, in the beſt Manner they could; and, if what *Naturaliſts* tell us be true, *viz.* that Myrrh was only to be found in *Arabia*, and Frankincenſe in *Sabæa* which is a Part of *Arabia*; that this Country was not deſtitute of Gold, 2 *Chron.* ix. 14. and, at the ſame Time, was famous for Men converſant in *Aſtronomy*, this makes a very probable Argument, that the *Wiſemen* came from thence. But of this we ſhall ſee more hereafter.

IT is thought ſtrange by ſome, that *Joſephus*, who writes the Life of *Herod* in moſt of its Circumſtances, ſhould make no manner of Mention of the Murder of theſe Innocents: But, when it is conſidered, that *Joſephus* was only born in the firſt Year of *Caligula*, and the thirty-ſeventh of Chriſt; that he wrote his Hiſtory of the *Jewiſh* Wars (which he extracted from publick Records) in the fifty-ſixth Year of his Age; and that it can ſcarce be ſuppoſed, an Action ſo inglorious to the Memory of *Herod*, as this Maſſacre was, ſhould be preſerved in the *Jewiſh* Records; it is not ſo very wonderful, that he, who wrote about ninety-three Years after the Fact was committed, ſhould make no mention of it; nor is it very material that he did not, ſince we find *Macrobius*, an *heathen* Author about the latter End of the fourth Age, not forgetting to acquaint us that *Herod* the King ordered to be ſlain in *Syria* (which in *Roman* Authors, is frequently called *Judea*) ſome Children that were under two Years old, though he is miſtaken in the Circumſtances of the Story, when he makes *Herod*'s own Son to be one of them.

SOME will needs infer from hence, that this dreadful Maſſacre was not committed until our Lord was almoſt two Years old, becauſe they were Children of that Age, and under, whom *Herod* ordered to be ſlain: But, beſides that the *Greek* Word may ſignify one, who has lived one Year only, and ſo the Words may be tranſlated from a Year old, and under; *Herod* might poſſibly think, that the Star did not appear till ſome conſiderable Time after the young King's Birth, and ſo (to make ſure Work) might be induced to ſlay all born at *Bethlehem*, a Year before, and more, even to the Time of the Star's appearing: For he, who had the Heart to ſlay three of his own Sons, would hardly be ſparing of the Blood of other People's Children.

The Diſeaſe of which *Herod* died, and the Miſery which he ſuffered under it, plainly ſhewed that the Hand

Hand of God was then, in a ſignal Manner, upon him. For not long after the Murder of the Infants at *Bethlehem*, his Diſtemper (as *Joſephus* informs us) daily increaſed, after an unheard of Manner, and he himſelf laboured under the moſt loathſome and tormenting Accidents that can be imagined. *He had a lingering and waſting Fever, and grievous Ulcers in his Entrails and Bowels, a violent Cholick, and inſatiable Appetite, a venomous Swelling in his Feet, Convulſions in his Nerves, a perpetual Aſthma and ſtinking Breath, Rottenneſs in his Joints and privy Members, accompanied with prodigious Itchings, crawling Worms and intolerable Smells, ſo that he was a perfect Hoſpital of incurable Diſeaſes.* And thus he died in horrid Pain and Torment, being ſmitten by God for his many enormous Iniquities; for ſetting aſide ſome Appearances of Generoſity and Greatneſs, there was never a more compleat Tyrant than he. He ſuppreſſed and changed the High-prieſt's Office as he thought fit, and even profaned the Temple itſelf: He ſlew the legal King of the *Jews*, extirpated all the Race of the *Maccabees*, deſtroyed the whole *Sanhedrim*, and ſubſtituted others in their Room. Nor was his Rage confined to the *Jews*, but deſcended to his own Family and neareſt Relations, even to the executing his beloved Wife *Mariamne* and his two Sons, *Alexander* and *Ariſtobulus*, upon ſlight and trivial Occaſions. So wicked a Prince, as he was conſcious he had been, could not, he knew, occaſion any true Lamentation at his Death, but rather a great deal of Gladneſs and Rejoycing, all the Kingdom over; and therefore, to prevent this, he framed a Project which was one of the horrideſt that ever entered into the Mind of Man. All the Nobility, and moſt conſiderable Men in every City, Town and Village in *Judea*, upon Pain of Death, he ſummoned to come together to *Jericho*, where he was then lying ſick; and when they were come, commanded his Soldiers to ſhut them all up in a ſpacious Place called the *Hippodrome*; when,

having called his Sister *Salome*, and her Husband *Alexas*, with some choice Friends, he told them with Tears, *That he was sensible of the* Jews *Hatred to his Government and Person, and that his Death would be an high Satisfaction to them; that his Friends therefore ought to procure him some Solace and Diversion, in the midst of his bitter Anguish; which if they performed, according to his Order, the Mournings and Lamentations at his Death, would be as great and magnificent as ever any Prince had: And his Order was, that on the same Hour when he expired, the Soldiers should surround the* Hippodrome, *and put all the enclosed Persons to the Sword, and then publish his Death, which* (as he said) *would cause his Exit to be doubly triumphant*; first, *for the posthumous Execution of his Commands*; *and* secondly, *for the Quality and Number of his Mourners.* But *Salome* and *Alexas* not being wicked enough to do what they had been made solemnly to promise, chose rather to break their Obligation, than make themselves the Executioners of so bloody a Design; and therefore, as soon as *Herod* was dead, they opened the *Hippodrome*, and permitted all that were shut up in it, to return to their respective Homes.

THIS *Antipas* before-mentioned, his Father *Herod* had once appointed to be his Successor, but afterwards expunged him out of his Will, and only made him *Tetrarch*; but not long after his Brother's Accession to the Throne, he went to *Rome* with a Purpose to dispute the Kingdom with him, on Pretence that his Father's former Will, by which he was constituted King, ought to take Place before the latter, which was made when his Understanding was not so perfect. Both the Brothers procured able Orators to set forth their Pretensions before the Emperor, but the Emperor nevertheless refused to decide any Thing concerning their Affair; nor did he at length give *Archelaus* the Title of a King, but only of an *Ethnarch*, with one Moiety of the Territories which his Father enjoyed; but these, in a few Years after, he,

by

by his ill Conduct, forfeited. Of all the Sons of *Herod*, indeed, this *Archelaus* is ſaid to have been of the moſt fierce and bloody Temper. At his firſt Acceſſion to the Government, under the Pretence of a Mutiny, he had killed near three thouſand of his Subjects; and therefore *Joſeph*, hearing of this, might well dread to go and ſettle in any Part of his Dominions; but as *Antipas* was a Man of more mild Diſpoſition, and the Birth of *Jeſus* not made ſo pulic in *Galilee*, and at *Nazareth*, as it was at *Bethlehem*, and even at *Jeruſalem*, by the Coming of the Wiſemen, and what happened at the Purification of the Bleſſed Virgin, it was thought more adviſeable to retreat into this Village, than to ſet up their Abode in any populous City.

N. B. THAT the *vulgar Chriſtian Æra*, according to *Dionyſius Exiguus*, which commences four Years after the true Time of *Chriſt*'s Birth, may begin to be computed much about this Time, *viz.* from the Beginning of the fourth Year of *Archelaus*'s, and thirty-firſt of *Auguſtus*'s Reign, computing from his Victory over *Anthony* and *Cleopatra*.

JESUS *increaſed in Wiſdom, and in Stature, and in Favour with God and Man*, Luke ii. 52. but if it be aſked, how he, who was the eternal Wiſdom of his Father, could be improved in any Quality of the Mind? The Anſwer is, that all Things in Scripture, which are ſpoken of *Chriſt*, are not ſpoken with reſpect to his intire Perſon, but only with reſpect to one or other of the Natures, that are united in that Perſon. His divine Nature was infinite, and conſequently capable of no Improvements, but his human was: And therefore, though the divine *Logos* was united to the human Soul, by his Conception, yet might the Divine Nature communicate its Powers to the Human, by diſtinct and gradual Illuminations; and accordingly we may obſerve, that all public Manifeſtation of it to the World, ſeems to have been induſtriouſly declined, 'till Ripeneſs of Years

and

and Judgment had carried him up to the Perfections of a Man. So little Reaſon have we to ſuppoſe, that he, who condeſcended to be like us in Body, ſhould think it below him to be ſo too, in that other no leſs eſſential, but much more noble Part of us, our Soul, without which it was impoſſible for him to be Man; ſo little Reaſon to imagine that the divine Eſſence in him ſupplied the Place and Offices of intellectual Faculties.

WHEN *Paleſtine* was reduced to this State, and our bleſſed Saviour now advanced to the twelfth Year of his Age, according to their annual Cuſtom, he went up with his Parents to *Jeruſalem* at the Time of the *Paſſover*. His Parents, after a Stay of ſeven Days, having performed the uſual Ceremonies of the Feaſt, were now returning, with great Numbers of their Neighbours and Acquaintance, towards *Galilee*; and never doubting, but that *Jeſus* had joined himſelf with ſome of the Company, they travelled on patiently for a whole Day's Journey; but when Night came on, and among their Relations and particular Friends they could hear no Tidings of him, it is not eaſy to imagine the Greatneſs of their Fears and Apprehenſions, which made them return to *Jeruſalem*, with the utmoſt Speed, to make all poſſible Enquiry for him.

AT the End of three Days, they found him in one of the Rooms of the Temple, (probably in that of the grand *Sanhedrim*) ſitting among the learned Doctors and Maſters of *Iſrael*, hearing them diſcourſe, and propounding ſuch Queſtions to them, as raiſed the Admiration of all his Auditors, and made them aſtoniſhed at the Ripeneſs of his Underſtanding. Nor were his Parents leſs ſurprized to find him in that Place; but when his Mother told him with what Impatience they had ſought him, and in ſome meaſure blamed him for putting them in ſuch a Fright; the Excuſe which he made for himſelf, was, *Knew you not that I muſt be employed in my Father's*

Father's Houſe? Words, which though ſhe at that Time did not rightly underſtand, ſhe took care, nevertheleſs, for ever after, to regiſter in her Mind!

BEING thus happily found by his Parents, he returned with them to *Nazareth*, and there living in all dutiful Subjection to them, wrought, very probably, with his reputed Father, in the Trade of a Carpenter, and after his Father's Death (which is ſuppoſed to have happened about a Year before the preaching of *John the Baptiſt*) he ſtill continued in the ſame Occupation; as indeed we can ſcarce help inferring, from the rude Treatment of the *Nazarenes* his Townſmen, as alſo from the total Silence of the *Evangeliſts*, as to the intermediate Actions of his Life, that though he *grew in favour with God and Man*, yet, conſidering his Excellencies, he lived in a very obſcure Manner, and till the Time of his Manifeſtation to *Iſrael*, ſhewed no miraculous Marks to diſtinguiſh him from the reſt of Mankind.

IT is commonly obſerved by thoſe that are learned in the Cuſtoms and Inſtitutions of the *Jewiſh* Church, that until a Child was of twelve Years old, he was not obliged to go to *Jeruſalem*, at the Time of the *Paſſover*; and that though their Youths were uſually thirteen before they were brought before the Maſters of the *Synagogue*, to give an Account of their Proficiency in Religion (which anſwers, in a great Meaſure, to the Chriſtian Rite of Confirmation) yet, ſince the Seaſon then appointed, was accommodated to the Capacities and Attainments of Children in general, without forbidding thoſe of Qualifications extraordinary, and whoſe Genius (in the *Jewiſh* Phraſe) *did run before the Commandment*, to appear ſooner, our Saviour might offer himſelf, to his Examination, a Year before the common Time; and this is the beſt Reaſon that can be aſſigned for his ſtaying behind his Parents, when he could not but know, that they were departed from *Jeruſalem* without him; and for his being found in one of the

Rooms

Rooms adjoining to the Temple, where the Doctors of the Law uſed to meet not only to reſolve the Queſtions that were brought before them, but to examine likewiſe and confirm ſuch of the Youth as they found to be qualified for that Ceremony; which, according to the ſame Authors, was uſually performed by devout Prayers and ſolemn Benedictions.

IT may ſeem a little ſtrange perhaps, that *Mary* and *Joſeph*, who had been ſufficiently inſtructed, one would think, in the great Article of *Chriſt*'s Divinity, and therefore muſt certainly know, that as *he was the Power and Wiſdom of God*, he could neither fall into any Danger, nor come to any Harm, ſhould ſo mightily afflict themſelves, when they came to miſs him. The Reaſon which *Origen* ſeems to aſſign is, not that his Parents ſuppoſed that he was loſt, or come to any Miſchance, but were apprehenſive that he had withdrawn himſelf to ſome other Place, and was poſſibly gone up to Heaven, there to continue until his eternal Father ſhould think proper to ſend him down again: But the moſt eaſy and natural Solution is, that without ever conſidering what they had ſufficient Reaſon to believe concerning his Divinity and Omnipotence, they ſuffered themſelves to be carried away by their natural Tenderneſs, and could not, without great Concern, ſee themſelves deprived of his Company, uncertain of what had befallen him, or for what poſſible Reaſon he ſhould abſent himſelf from theirs. It muſt not be denied, however, that though ſomething may be allowed to a Parent's Fondneſs, yet it does not appear from their whole Conduct, and eſpecially from *Mary*'s Complaint, and our Saviour's Reply, that they had, as yet, a clear and perfect Knowledge of his divine Nature in Union with the human, and therefore the *Evangeliſt* has remarked upon them, *That they underſtood not the Saying which he ſpake unto them.*

FROM

FROM the Words in the Text, *After three Days they found him*; we need not thence infer, that they were three Days ſeeking him, but rather, that it was three Days from the Time they ſet out from *Jeruſalem*; going on their Journey the firſt Day; returning to *Jeruſalem* the ſecond; and finding him in the Temple on the third: For ſince they found him in the Temple, which, in all Probability, was the firſt Place they ſought for him, we can hardly imagine that they ſhould be three Days in *Jeruſalem* before they found him.

IT may poſſibly be made a Queſtion, why the *Evangeliſts* have given us no Account of our Saviour's Life, from the twelfth Year of his Age, till he began his Miniſtry, which, according to the vulgar *Æra*, was about the thirtieth; becauſe, if in this intermediate Space, he did any Thing worthy of Remembrance, it ought, in all Reaſon, to have been recorded. But when it is conſidered, that the End of the ſacred Penman was, not ſo much to gratify our Curioſity, as to conſult our Profit, we cannot but admire the great Wiſdom of God (by whoſe Inſpiration they wrote) in paſſing by the leſs active Parts of our Lord's Life, which would certainly have ſwelled their Goſpels to immenſurable Volumes, fit for the Peruſal of none but the Studious, and ſuch as had Plenty of Time at their Command; whereas now, taking the four Goſpels together, they make but a ſmall Book, and ſeparately, no more than little Manuals that may be carried about us where-ever we go, may be ſoon read over, and eaſily remembered, even by Men of mean Capacities, and no great Leiſure; and yet they contain all the Tranſactions of our Saviour's Life, which chiefly concerns us to know; I mean, ſuch as relate to his mediatorial Office, as that he came into the World to teach us; to die, and to riſe again for us; to inſtruct us by his heavenly Doctrine, as our Prophet; to offer himſelf a Sacrifice on the Croſs, as our Prieſt; and to looſe

the Bands of Death, and aſcend triumphant into Heaven, as our King. *For there are alſo many other Things*, ſays the Evangeliſt, *that* Jeſus *did, which are not written in this Book, but theſe are written, that ye might believe that* Jeſus *is the Chriſt, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have Life through his Name*, John xxi. 25, and xx. 31.

IN the eighteenth Year of our Saviour's Life, died *Auguſtus Ceſar*, at *Nola* in *Campania*, after a Reign of near forty-four Years, to the inexpreſſible Grief of all his Subjects, and was ſucceeded by *Tiberius*, the Son of his Wife *Livia*, by a former Huſband, but a Prince of quite contrary Diſpoſition to his Predeceſſor. In the ſecond Year of his Acceſſion to the Empire, he called *Rufus* from the Government of *Judea*, and ſent *Valerius Gratus* (who was the fourth Governor in theſe Parts, ſince the Baniſhment of *Archelaus*) to ſucceed him. *Gratus* having continued in *Judea* about eleven Years, was at length recalled, and *Pontius Pilate* (a Perſon too like his Maſter *Tiberius*, of a fierce and irreconcileable Spirit, and of a cruel and covetous Diſpoſition) was ſent Governor in his Place; in the firſt Year of whoſe coming (which was the fifteenth Year of *Tiberius*, from the Time that he was admitted to reign in Co-partnerſhip with *Auguſtus*) *John the Baptiſt* began to open his Commiſſion for the Preparation of our Saviour's Way before him, by preaching *the Baptiſm of Repentance for the Remiſſion of Sins*.

HE had been bred up in the *Wilderneſs*, and lived an auſtere Life on Locuſts and Wild-honey, ſuch as Nature produced in theſe deſart Places, was the chief Diet he lived upon, and a looſe Coat made of Camels Hair, and faſtened with a Leathern Girdle, the only Garb he wore; and therefore no Perſon was ſo proper to inculcate the Doctrines of Repentance and Reformation, as he, who by his free and reſolute Preaching, joined with this great Severity of Life, ſoon procured a vaſt Auditory, and numerous Proſelytes

lytes of all Ranks and Qualities, from *Jeruſalem* and all *Judea*, and all the Region about *Jordan*, confeſſing their Sins before God, and entering into this new Inſtitution by Baptiſm.

AMONG the great Multitudes that came to his Preaching and Baptiſm, there were *Phariſees*, and *Sadducees* not a few, whoſe Confidence and Immorality he ſharply reproved, while at the ſame Time he exhorted the common People to Works of extenſive Charity; the *Publicans*, to avoid Oppreſſion and Injuſtice; the Soldiers to abſtain from Plunder and Violence; and every one, in ſhort, to beware of thoſe Crimes to which their Employments and Manner of Life did moſt expoſe them.

THESE ſolemn Admonitions, attended with ſo much Innocence and Authority, procured him a mighty Veneration among the People; inſomuch that ſeveral began to look upon him as the promiſed, and now expected *Meſſiah*: But, to remove all Thoughts of this Kind, he freely declared, that he only baptized them with *Water*, to Repentance and a new Life; but that there was one coming, and ready to appear among them, who would baptize them with the Effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and who ſo far exceeded him in Power and Excellency, that he was not worthy to do for him, the meaneſt or moſt ſervile Office. Theſe were the Doctrines which *John* preached, and this the Teſtimony which he gave of *Jeſus*, even before he had the Happineſs to know him.

AFTER *John* had continued in his Miniſtry for ſeveral Months, our Lord thought proper to remove from his private Retirement, at *Nazareth*, and taking Leave of his Mother and his Trade, paſſed over into *Judea*, to *Bethabara*, on the Banks of the River *Jordan*, where *John* was then baptizing.

HE, who was Innocence and Purity itſelf, had certainly no Need of the Baptiſm of Repentance, but being minded to honour and ſanctify the Inſtitution, he offered himſelf to *John*; and when *John*, inſpired

with a prophetic Spirit, knew him, and thereupon endeavoured to decline the Office, he gave him ſuch Reaſons for the Expediency of the Thing, as made him no longer heſitate, but immediately baptize him. *Jeſus* was no ſooner got out of the Water, but as he was making his Addreſſes to Heaven, the Sky on a ſudden was divided by a great Radiancy, and the *Holy Ghoſt*, in the Manner of a Dove, deſcending upon his ſacred Head, with an audible Voice from Heaven, wherein God declared him his *beloved Son, in whom he was well pleaſed.*

JOSEPHUS has given us ſeveral Inſtances of *Pilate*'s great Cruelty in the Courſe of his Government, *viz.* that he cauſed the *Roman* Soldiers to fall upon a great Number of *Galileans* (very likely the Followers of *Judas Gaulonites*) and to ſlaughter them like ſo many Sheep, in the Temple, and on the very Day appointed for the killing of the Paſſover, and ſo *mingled their Blood with their Sacrifices*, Luke xiii. 1. That when the People clamoured againſt his taking ſome of the ſacred Money out of the Temple, he ordered the Soldiers, upon a Signal given, to fall upon them with large Battoons, ſo that many died of the Blows which they received, and many were trodden to death in the Throng: And that the *Samaritans*, as well as the *Jews*, felt the Severity of his Adminiſtration, when he deſtroyed great Numbers of them near *Tirathaba*; and of thoſe whom he took, that were of any Intereſt or Quality among them, ſtruck off their Heads.

How *John* paſſed the former Part of his Life, the Scripture is ſilent; but there is an antient Tradition in the Church, that *Elizabeth*, hearing of the ſad Havock which *Herod*'s Barbarity had made among the Infants in *Bethlehem*, fled into the Wilderneſs, to ſecure her Child from the Tyrant's Rage, and there attended him with all the Care and Tenderneſs of an affectionate Mother: That the Child was about eighteen Months old, when his Mother thus fled

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with him, but after forty Days ſhe died, and his Father *Zacharias*, at the next Time of his Adminiſtration, was, by the Command of *Herod* (becauſe he would not diſcover the Place of his Son's Concealment) put to Death: That in this Deſtitution of natural Parents, God ſent an Angel to be his Nouriſher and Guardian (as he had formerly done to *Elijah*, when he fled from the Rage of *Ahab*) until he came of Strength to provide for himſelf, and that then he lived in the manner that the *Evangeliſts* have deſcribed. When he began his Preaching it is not ſo well agreed. *Lightfoot*, and ſome others, who believe that our Saviour was born in *September*, and that *John* was now beginning to be thirty Years of Age, are of Opinion that he began his Miniſtry about the Paſſover; but *Uſher* and his Followers, do with more Probability ſuppoſe, that his Preaching began upon the tenth Day of the ſeventh Month (which anſwers to our nineteenth Day of *October*) five Days before the Feaſt of *Tabernacles*, upon the great Day of *Expiation*, when the High-prieſt entered the *Holy of Holies*, and when ſo ſolemn a Faſt was injoined, that whoſoever did not afflict his Soul at that Time, was to be cut off from the People.

THE Meaning of the Phraſe is, that *John* preached Repentance, *Matt.* iii. 2. and baptized thoſe that were penitent, in Token of the Remiſſion of their Sins, even as they, on their Parts received Baptiſm, in Teſtimony of the Sincerity of their Repentance. Now Baptiſm, we know, was no new or ſtrange Thing among the *Jews*. It was acknowledged and practiſed, as an Emblem of *Purification* from paſt Guilt, and a Rite of entering ſolemnly into Covenant with God. The Expoſitors of their Law agree, that this Ceremony paſſed upon the whole Congregation of *Iſrael*, juſt before the Law was given at Mount *Sinai*; and their Cuſtom, in all ſucceeding Ages, has been, to receive their heathen Proſelytes by Baptiſm as well as by Sacrifices and Circumciſion.

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In Conformity to this therefore, *John* both adminiſtered and exhorted his Followers to his Ordinance of Baptiſm, as an Evidence of their Penitence for paſt Sins, and Profeſſion of better Obedience for the future: But then as Faith is a Qualification for Baptiſm, as well as Repentance, he propounded our Lord, for the Object of Faith to all who received this Ordinance at his Hands: *For* John *verily baptized with the Baptiſm of Repentance, ſaying unto the People, that they ſhould believe in him, who ſhould come after him*, i. e. *on* Chriſt Jeſus, Acts xix. 4. It is a great Miſtake therefore, in ſome, to ſuppoſe that the Baptiſm of *John* was in Subſtance, the ſame with what *Chriſt* did afterwards inſtitute: For *John* neither did, nor could baptize his Diſciples in the *Name of the Holy Ghoſt*, as the Apoſtles did, becauſe the *Holy Ghoſt, was not yet given*, John vii. 39. he did not baptize them in the Name of *Chriſt*, for had he done ſo, there had been no Occaſion for the Queſtion, *Whether he himſelf were the Chriſt*, or not? *Luke* iii. 15. Herein therefore lay the Imperfection of *John*'s Baptiſm, that though it prepared Men to be Chriſtians, yet it did not make them ſo; and therefore we find St. *Paul* baptizing again ſome Diſciples at *Epheſus* (who had before received the Baptiſm of *John*) in order to fit them for the Reception of the Holy Ghoſt, *Acts* xix. 5, 6.

A WILDERNESS, among the *Jews*, did not ſignify a Place wholly void of Inhabitants, but a Place that was more mountainous, leſs fruitful, leſs peopled, and where the Habitations were more diſperſed, than in other Parts of the Country; and the Wilderneſs of *Judea*, where *John* preached and baptized, lay on each Side of the River *Jordan*, on the Confines of *Enon* and *Salim*.

THERE is no Reaſon for running into Criticiſms, what the common Diet of the *Baptiſt* was, whether Fowl or Fiſh, or Herbs or wild Peaſe, (for the *Greek* Word has been made to ſignify all theſe) ſince the Thing

Thing is notorious, that Locuſts (in the moſt obvious Senſe of the Word) were Creatures which the *Levitical* Law looked upon as clean, and allowed the *Jews* to eat, *Levit.* xi. 22. that they were a common Food, as the Antients affirm in *Africa*, *Perſia*, *Syria*, and even *Paleſtine* itſelf: that, according to the Account of ſome modern Authors, in ſome Places they are brought in Waggon-loads, and ſold in the Market for the common People to feed on; and that they are frequently ſeen upon the Banks of the River *Jordan*, of the ſame Form, but much larger than ours; and being either fried in Oil, or dried in the Sun, are accounted a good Sort of Food. As little Reaſon is there for Men to puzzle themſelves about what this wild Honey means, ſince every one knows that *Judea* was ſo famed for Plenty of Honey, that, in ſeveral Places of Scripture, it is ſaid to flow with Honey; and from the Inſtances of *Sampſon*, Judg. xiv. 8. and *Jonathan*, 2 Sam. xix. 25. it muſt be concluded, that wild Honey, ſuch as either diſtilled from the Boughs like Dew, or was found in the Cliffs of Rocks, or hollow Trunks of Trees, was no uncommon Thing in that Country. But though theſe Locuſts and wild Honey, may very properly be taken in their natural and moſt obvious Senſe, yet it muſt not therefore be thought that *John* never eat any Thing elſe, but that, for the Generality, he made uſe of ſuch ſlender Diet, and contented himſelf with what the deſart Place, which he choſe for his Habitation, could afford him.

WE are told, by ſome Authors, that the Hair of Camels, about the *Caſpian Sea*, was formerly the ſofteſt in the World, of which was made a very fine Stuff; and that, in the Empire of the great *Cham* of *Tartary*, in the City of *Calacia*, the Metropolis of the Province of *Tangouth*, there is a Kind of Cloth, which the Inhabitants call *Zambelotte* (the ſame, no doubt, with what we call *Camelot*) made of Wool and Camels-Hair, perfectly good, and as fine as

any

any Cloth whatever. But there is Reaſon good to think, that *John*'s Habit was far from being of this Kind, becauſe it would not ſo well ſuit with the Condition of a Man living in a Wilderneſs, to whom our Saviour oppoſes thoſe that are cloathed in ſoft Raiment; would not ſo well agree with the Evangeliſt's Deſign of ſetting forth the *Baptiſt*'s Auſterity in his Habit, as well as his Diet; nor comport ſo well with the Deſcription of *Elias*, whom he came to repreſent, *an hairy Man, and one girt with a Girdle of Leather about his Loins*, 2 Kings i. 8. Though therefore we may not infer from the Expreſſion, that the *Baptiſt*'s Habit was mere Sackcloth, (as ſome would have it) yet we cannot but conclude from thence, that it was plain and coarſe, ſuch as became the Place where he lived (where Camels, we are told, were in great Plenty) and a Prophet and Preacher of Righteouſneſs to wear.

WE need only take Notice here, that the *Phariſees* are thought to take their Name from the Word *Paraſh*, which ſignifies, *Separation*, becauſe they were ſeparated from all others in their extraordinary Pretences to Sanctity, and ſome particular Obſervances; and that the *Sadducees*, (who were directly oppoſite to the *Phariſees*, both in Temper and Principles) derived their Name, either from *Sadoc*, who lived near three hundred Years before our Saviour's Birth, and is ſuppoſed to be the Founder of the Sect, or (as ſome think) from *Sedec*, which ſignifies Juſtice, and were very rigid, indeed, in the Execution of it.

THE Publicans were Perſons of no particular Sect, nor of any religious Function among the *Jews*, but certain public Officers, whom the *Romans* employed to collect their Tributes, Tolls and Impoſts. This Office was once of great Account among the *Romans*, and conferred upon none leſs than the *Equeſtrian* Order; but when it came to fall into the Hands of the *Jews*, who farmed it of the *Romans*, it ſoon became baſe and infamous, and more eſpecially odious

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to the *Jews*, upon theſe two Accounts: 1ſt, Becauſe theſe Tributes were looked upon as a ſtanding Inſtance of their Slavery, which they, who made ſuch Boaſts of their being a free-born People, and inveſted with that Privilege by God himſelf, could leaſt of all endure. And 2dly, Becauſe theſe *Publicans* having farmed the Cuſtoms, of the *Romans*, at high Rates, did generally make uſe of all Methods of Extortion and Oppreſſion, to enable them both to pay their Rents, and to make ſome Advantage to themſelves. Upon theſe Accounts, the *Publicans*, as conſpiring with the *Romans*, both to impoveriſh and enſlave their Countrymen, became ſo univerſally abhorred by the *Jewiſh* Nation, that they held it unlawful to do them any Act of common Courteſy, nay, even to eat or drink with them, for which we find them ſo frequently blaming our Saviour.

BETHABARA, in the *Hebrew* Language, ſignifies as much *as a Place of Paſſage*; and therefore, whereas we read, *Joſh.* ii. 7, 23. that there was a fording Place over *Jordan*, not far from *Jericho*; and again, *Joſh.* iii. 16. that the People paſſed over right againſt *Jericho*, it is probably conjectured, that hereabouts ſtood *Bethabara*, and was the Place of Reception and Entertainment for Paſſengers out of *Judea* in *Perea*, or the Country beyond *Jordan*; nay, it is imagined by ſome, that in the very ſame Place of the River where the Ark ſtood, while the *Iſraelites* paſſed over, our bleſſed Saviour, the Ark of the Covenant of Grace, was baptized by *John the Baptiſt*.

THERE are ſome other Reaſons which might induce our Lord to come to *John*'s Baptiſm, beſides what himſelf alledges, *viz. the Performance of all Righteouſneſs*, or whatever had a Tendency in the People's Edification; as that he might authorize this Baptiſm of *John*, by his public Approbation; that by this Rite he might be initiated to his prophetic Office, and conſecrated to the Service of God;

that hereby he might aboliſh the Ceremony of the *Jewiſh* Baptiſm, and more effectually recommend that of his own Inſtitution, to which this of the *Baptiſt* was an Introduction; and more eſpecially, that in the Preſence of the *Baptiſt*, and all the Company that had reſorted to him, he might obtain the Teſtimony of the Holy Ghoſt, and his heavenly Father to confirm *John* in the Belief of his being the promiſed *Meſſiah*, and to induce the People, as ſoon as he began his Miniſtry, to follow and attend him.

THE Words in the Text are theſe, *Then cometh* Jeſus *from* Galilee *to* Jordan, *unto* John, *to be baptized of him, but* John *forbad him*, Luke iii. 13, 14. but how could *John* forbid him, when he ſays of himſelf, *I knew him not, but he that ſent me to baptize with Water, the ſame ſaid unto me, Upon whom thou ſhalt ſee the Spirit deſcending and remaining on him, the ſame is he who baptizeth with the* Holy Ghoſt, *John* i. 33. Now to this it may be anſwered, that ſince one Part of *John*'s Miniſtry was *to bear witneſs of that Light, which lighteth every Man that cometh into the World*, it was highly neceſſary, that our Saviour ſhould be unknown to him in Perſon, before he came to his Baptiſm, that the World might have no Suſpicion of any Colluſion, or that the *Baptiſt* teſtified of him by Compact. Though notwithſtanding he had never ſeen the Face of our Saviour, becauſe they were bred up in different Countries, yet by a particular Revelation, he knew that he was already come into the World, and was ſhortly to baptize with the *Holy Ghoſt*; and therefore when our Saviour came, and preſented himſelf to be baptized, he had immediately another Revelation, that this was the great Perſon, of whom he had been told before; even as *Samuel*, having been told by God, that *on the Morrow, a Man ſhould come to him to be the Captain over his People* Iſrael, 1 *Sam.* ix. 15. upon *Saul*'s appearing, had another Inſpiration, reſembling the

Baptiſt's

Baptiſt's here. *Behold the Man of whom I ſpake to thee*, Ver. 17.

THE Obſervation of the *Greek* Church, in Relation to our Saviour's Baptiſm, is this, that he who aſcended out of the Water, muſt firſt deſcend down into it; and conſequently, *that Baptiſm is to be performed, not by ſprinkling, but by waſhing the Body.* And indeed he muſt be ſtrangely ignorant of the *Jewiſh* Rites of Baptiſm, who ſeems to doubt of this, ſince, to the due Performance of it, they required the Immerſion of the whole Body, to ſuch a Degree of Nicety, that if any Dirt was upon it, that hindered the Water from coming to that Part, they thought the Ceremony not rightly done. The Chriſtians, no doubt, took this Rite from the *Jews*, and followed them in their Manner of performing it. Accordingly, ſeveral Authors have ſhewn, that we read no where in Scripture of any one's being baptized, but by Immerſion, and from the Acts of Councils; and antient Rituals, have proved, that this Manner of Immerſion continued (as much as poſſible) to be uſed, for thirteen hundred Years after *Chriſt*. But it is much to be queſtioned, whether the Prevalence of Cuſtom, and the over Fondneſs of Parents, will, ever ſuffer it to be reſtored, eſpecially in theſe cold Countries.

THE Words in St. *Matthew*,——*Lo the Heavens were open*, in St. *Mark*, *cloven* or *rent*. The common People of the *Jews*, indeed, were of Opinion, that the Heavens were firm and ſolid, and that the Fire, which fell from thence upon the Face of the Earth, burſt through this Firmament, and made an Opening in this vaſt Convex, that ſurrounds us: And therefore it is that the *Evangeliſts* expreſs themſelves in this Manner, in Accommodation to the Prejudices and Capacities of the Vulgar. But by the Phraſe we need underſtand no more, than that a ſudden Beam of radiant Light came darting from the Skies, (like a Flaſh of Lightning from the Clouds) and

made it ſeem as though the Heavens had been opened, or rent, to let it out; becauſe, to the naked Eye, the Air, at that Time ſeems to divide to make a clearer and fuller Way for the Light.

THE Antients were generally of Opinion, that the *Holy Ghoſt*, in his Deſcent upon our Saviour, aſſumed the real Shape of a Dove, which, at that Time, more eſpecially, was a very proper Repreſentation of his Dove-like Nature, *Iſaiah* xlii. 2. and of all ſuch as were to receive the ſame Spirit, and are required to be as harmleſs as Doves; but moſt of the Moderns (though they allow that the bleſſed Spirit did, at this Time, aſſume a viſible Shape, to render his Deſcent manifeſt) do maintain that the *Greek* Words relate not to the Body or Shape of a *Dove*, but to the Manner of a Dove's deſcending, and lighting on any Thing. Whether of theſe Opinions ſhould prevail, it is idle to diſpute, ſince neither of them are deſtitute of ſome Countenance from Scripture, neither of them injurious to the Dignity of the Holy Ghoſt.

OUR Bleſſed Lord, being thus by Baptiſm and the Unction of the Holy Ghoſt, prepared for his prophetic Office, was, by the Impulſe of the divine Spirit, carried farther into the Wilderneſs of *Judea*, where, after he had faſted forty Days and forty Nights, (as *Moſes* did on Mount *Sinai*) and was now very hungry, the Devil aſſumed a bodily Shape, and ſet upon him with a threefold Temptation. Firſt, from his Hunger he took Occaſion to tempt him to deſpair and diſtruſt of his Father's Care of him, who had abandoned him in that Condition, and therefore perſuading him that he was not the Son of God, he put him upon the Experiment of his being ſuch, by making the Stones become Bread: But our Saviour ſoon anſwered him by a Paſſage out of the Scripture, intimating, that God, when he pleaſed, could employ Means extraordinary for the Support and Nouriſhment of Men. Secondly, His next Eſſay was to try how far Pride and Preſumption would

affect

affect him; and therefore carrying him through the Air, and ſetting him upon the higheſt Part of the Temple, he put him upon the Proof of his being the Son of God, by throwing himſelf off from thence, and flying in the Air, alledging a Text out of the *Pſalmiſt*, to encourage him: But *Jeſus* as ſoon anſwered him by another Text, commanding Men not to tempt God, or depend upon his Providence for their Conſervation, in Dangers of their own ſeeking. Thirdly, His laſt Experiment was, to tempt him with the Charms of Ambition; and therefore, tranſporting him again through the Air, to the Top of an exceeding high Mountain, he there, by an angelical Power, made a lively Repreſentation to him, of all the Kingdoms of the World, with all their dazzling Glories, at one View, and then told him, that theſe, with all their Pomp and Splendor, were delivered to his Diſpoſal, and ſhould be given to him, if he would but acknowledge his Benefactor and worſhip him: But this was Boldneſs and Blaſphemy, ſuch as provoked our Lord to exert his divine Power, and to command him peremptorily to be gone, but with this *Memento* out of Scripture likewiſe, *Thou ſhalt worſhip the Lord thy God, and him only ſhalt thou ſerve:* Whereupon the Devil left him for that Time, and Angels, ſent from Heaven, came with Refreſhments for him, after his triumphant Combat.

DURING our Saviour's Temptation in the Deſart, his faithful Fore-runner, *John the Baptiſt*, being thus aſſured, both by the Deſcent of the Spirit, and the Voice from Heaven, that *Jeſus* was the true and long expected *Meſſiah*, he made full and open Declarations of it to all the Multitude that came to hear him; and when the grand *Sanhedrim* at *Jeruſalem* had ſent a Deputation of their Prieſts and *Levites*; (who were of the Sect of the *Phariſees*) to demand of him, *Who he was?* He very readily acknowledged, that he was not the *Meſſiah* whom they expected, nor

Elias,

Elias, who, as they imagined, would perſonally appear among them, nor any other Prophet riſen from the Dead; but then he gave them to underſtand, that though he was not *Elias* himſelf, yet he was that Prophet, whom *Iſaiah* intended, when he called him, *the Voice of one crying in the Wilderneſs, make ſtrait the Way of the Lord*; that his Baptiſm was only of Water, but the Efficacy of it depended upon one among them, whom they knew not, one, who ſucceeded him, indeed, in Time, but ſo far ſurpaſſed him in Dignity, that he was not worthy ſo much as to be his Servant.

THE very next Day after the Departure of the *Phariſees*, as our Saviour was returning from the Wilderneſs to *Bethabara*, *John* pointed him out to the Multitude, as *the immaculate Lamb of God, which taketh away the Sins of Mankind*, and then freely declared, that he was the very Perſon of whoſe Superiority, both in Dignity and Exiſtence he had ſpoken, and of whom, by certain Tokens he knew, and *could bear record that he was the Son of God.*

To two of his own Diſciples, the next Day, he gave the ſame Teſtimony, inſomuch that they left their old Maſter, and followed *Jeſus*; and when *Andrew*, (who was one of them) went and diſcovered the ſame Thing to his elder Brother *Simon*, he too became one of his Diſciples, to whom, the Day following, were adjoined *Philip*, an Inhabitant of the City *Bethſaida*, and an intimate Friend of his, named *Nathanael*, of *Cana* in *Galilee*, ſuppoſed to be the ſame with the Apoſtle *Bartholomew*.

WITH theſe five Diſciples, *Jeſus* and his Mother were invited, next Day, to a Marriage-feaſt in *Cana*, a ſmall Place in *Galilee*, not far from *Nazareth*. At this Solemnity there happened to be a Scarcity of Wine, which when his Mother underſtood, ſhe made her Application to him, in hopes that by ſome Means or other he would not fail to ſupply the Defect. In other Inſtances, no doubt, ſhe had been made

made ſenſible of his ſupernatural Power; and therefore (though his Anſwer ſeems to carry in it the Appearance of a Denial) ſhe ſtill expected, ſomething extraordinary from him, and therefore ordered the Waiters to obey his Commands with the utmoſt Exactneſs.

THE Cuſtom of the *Jews*, in all their Entertainments, was to uſe frequent Waſhings; and, for this Purpoſe, there were, in a certain private Room, ſix Water-ciſterns, containing each about twenty Gallons of our Meaſure. Theſe our Saviour commanded the Servants to fill up to the Brim, and when they had ſo done, to carry the Liquor to the Governor of the Feaſt, for him to diſtribute to the reſt of the Company, as the Manner then was. But when the Governor had taſted it, he was not a little ſurprized; and calling to the Bridegroom, told him, with a pleaſant Air, *That at moſt Entertainments like this, it was an uſual Thing for People to bring out their beſt Wine at firſt, and worſe when the Gueſts had drank plentifully; but that he, contrary to the common Cuſtom, had reſerved his beſt to the latter End of the Feaſt.*

THIS was the firſt Miracle our Saviour did in any public Manner, which proved both a Manifeſtation of his own Divinity, and a Confirmation of his own Diſciples Faith. From *Cana* he went down to *Capernaum*, the Place where he uſually afterwards reſided; but his Stay at this Time was not long there, becauſe his Purpoſe was to go to *Jeruſalem* at the approaching Feaſt of the *Paſſover*.

WHOEVER conſiders the Weakneſs of human Nature, cannot but allow, that ſo great and ſo long an Abſtinence, without any Senſe of Hunger (for the *Evangeliſts* tells us that our Saviour was only hungry afterwards) muſt be altogether miraculous, and ſo no Duty to us; and if he reflects withal, that the End of his Faſt was not to chaſtize or ſubdue that Body, which was never irregular, (as the Deſign

of

of all Fasting is) he must allow, that our Saviour, in this Particular, set no Precedent to us, and therefore it is Cruelty or a superstitious Folly, at least, in a Matter so supernatural, to enjoin Men to follow his Steps.

THE Word *Devil*, which answers exactly with the *Hebrew Satan*, signifies a *Calumniator* or *Accuser*; and, as it occurs in Scripture, always in the singular Number, is supposed to denote that evil Spirit who tempted our first Parents, the Chief of the Rebel-Angels, and the avowed Enemy of the Saints.

ACCORDING to the Description that *Josephus* gives us of the Temple which *Herod* built, we hear of no Pinnacles or lofty Turrets above the rest of the Building; and therefore have Reason to think, that the *Greek* which is rendered *Pinnacle*, should rather signify the Battlement, or that Parapet-wall which was carried round to the Top of the Temple, (as well as private Houses, *Deut.* xxii. 8.) to keep Men from falling from the Roof. And if we may be allowed to conjecture on what Part of the Battlement it was, that the Devil placed our Saviour, it seems very likely that was on the Top of that Gallery whose Building (according to the same Author) was so prodigious high, and the Valley underneath it so stupendiously deep, that it turned ones Eyes and Head to look from the Top to the Bottom of it, and was, indeed, one of the most confounding Spectacles under the Sun.

THE best Account that we have, both of the Wilderness and high Mountain, where our Lord was tempted, is in the Travels of Mr. *Maundrel*, (for the Antients tells us very little of them) who inform us, That, in his Journey from *Jerusalem* to *Jordan*, after he passed over Mount *Olivet*, he proceeded in an intricate Way, among Hills and Vallies interchangeably; and after some Hours Travel in this sort of Road, arrived at the mountainous Desart, into which

which our bleſſed Saviour was led by the Spirit, to be tempted by the Devil: *A miſerable dry Place*, ſays he, *it is, conſiſting of high rocky Mountains, ſo torn and diſordered, as if the Earth had here ſuffered ſome great Convulſion, in which its very Bowels had been turned outward. From the Top of theſe Hills of Deſolation, we had, however, a delightful Proſpect of* Arabia, *the* Dead-Sea, *and the Plains of* Jericho, *into which laſt we deſcended, after about five Hours March from* Jeruſalem. *As ſoon as we entered the Plain, we turned upon the Left-Hand, and going about one Hour that Way, came to the Foot of the* Quarantania, *(ſo called from our Lord's forty Days Faſt) which, they ſay, is the Mountain where the Devil tempted him with the viſionary Scene of all the Kingdoms and Glories of the World. It is very high and ſteep, and its Aſcent not only difficult, but dangerous.* This is the Account which our Countryman gives us of the Place where our Saviour was probably tempted: But it is not ſuppoſable, that even from the higheſt Mountain of the World, the Devil could ſhew all the Kingdoms of it, and therefore the moſt rationable Account of this Matter, is that, *as he was the Prince of the Power of the Air, he formed an airy Horizon* (as Dr. *Lightfoot* expreſſes it) *before the Eyes of* Chriſt, *which might carry ſuch a pompous and glorious Appearance of Kingdoms, States and Royalties, in the Face of it, as if he had ſeen thoſe very Kingdoms and States in Reality.* God, we are told, cauſed *Moſes* to ſee the whole *Land of Promiſe* from the Top of *Nebo*, (as it is generally thought) by repreſenting it to him in a large Plan or Map of it, in all the Vallies round about him; and in like Manner (by the divine Permiſſion) in all the Vallies round about the high Mountain, on which our Lord ſtood, the Devil might make a large Draught of the ſtately Edifices, the Guards and Attendants of Kings and Princes appearing in their Splendor, viſible to the Eye, which

he could not have ſeen ſo advantageouſly, had he ſtood on a Plain.

THE *Sanhedrim* thought proper, out of their Body, to depute ſuch as were of the Sect of the *Phariſees*, becauſe, as they were Perſons who believed the Immortality of the Soul, and the Reſurrection of the Body; they were better qualified than the *Sadducees*, who believed neither, to enquire of *John*, whether he was *Elias*; being, in this Particular, mere *Pythagoreans*, and fancying that the Soul of one great Man might frequently paſs into another's Body; and as they were the Patrons of Tradition, and exact in all the ordinary Rules and Cuſtoms that were to be obſerved, they were the properer Perſons to examine into this new Rite of Baptiſm, by way of Preparation for the *Meſſiah*, of which their Traditions were wholly ſilent, and therefore they aſk him, *Why baptizeſt thou?* i. e. *Why uſurpeſt thou an Authority which belongs to none, but either to the* Meſſiah, Elias, *or ſome other Prophet; by initiating us, who are already under the Covenant, into a new Doctrine by Baptiſm, which is uſually adminiſtered to none but heathen Proſelytes?* And from hence it appears, that the *Phariſees* were the propereſt Men to ſend to the *Baptiſt* upon this Meſſage.

IT was a received Tradition among the *Jews*, that at the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, ſeveral of the antient Prophets would ariſe from the Dead.

IT is the Opinion of ſome, that *John* choſe rather to preach and to fulfil his Miniſtry in the Wilderneſs, than in the Temple, in order to make a moſt illuſtrious Difference between himſelf and *Chriſt*, of whom it was propheſied, that he ſhould frequently appear and teach in the Temple, *Mal.* iii. 1.

UNDER the *Jewiſh* Law, when any Sacrifice was offered for Sin, he that brought it, laid his Hands upon it, according to the Commandment of God, *Levit.* i. 4. iii. 2. iv. 4. and by that Rite, transferred his Sins upon the Victim, which, after ſuch

Act,

Act, is ſaid *to take and to carry them away.* Accordingly, in the daily Sacrifices of the Lamb, the Stationary Men, who were the Repreſentatives of the People, and laid their Hands upon the Lambs that were to be offered, are ſaid to make an *Attonement for their Souls*, Exod. xxx. 15, 16. and, in Analogy hereunto, *Chriſt* is here called, by Way of Eminence, *the Lamb of God*, becauſe God intended to *lay upon him, who was manifeſt to take away Sin*, 1 John iii. 5. and came to ſuffer in our Stead, the Puniſhment due to the *Iniquities of us all.*

THERE is no mention of *Bethſaida* in the *Old Teſtament*, and the Reaſon is, becauſe (as *Joſephus* tells us) it was but a very ſmall Village, 'till *Philip the Tetrarch* built it up to the Bulk and Appearance of a very magnificent City, and gave it the Name of *Julius*, out of Reſpect to *Julia*, the Daughter of *Auguſtus Ceſar.* Its original Name, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, imports a Place of *fiſhing*, or elſe *hunting*; and for both theſe Exerciſes it was very commodiouſly ſituated. As it belonged to the Tribe of *Naphthali*, a Country remarkable for its Plenty of Deer, *Gen.* xlix. 21. it was excellently fitted for the latter of theſe Paſtimes, and as it lay on the North End of the Lake of *Gennezareth*, juſt where the River *Jordan* runs into it; it was ſo commodious for the former, that two of the Perſons juſt now mentioned, *viz. Peter* and *Andrew*, were Fiſhermen by Trade.

To aſcend and deſcend, to come and go, according to the *Hebrew* Manner of Expreſſion, denotes a free and familiar Commerce, and ſuch, no doubt, was the Miniſtry of Angels, at our Saviour's Temptation and Agony, at his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion. The Words, however, muſt be owned to be a plain Alluſion to *Jacob*'s Ladder, *Gen.* xxviii. 12, 13. on the Top of which was the Divine Majeſty, and the Angels aſcending to receive his Commands, and deſcending to execute them: And therefore others have thought that *Chriſt*, by theſe Words, intended to in-

form his Apoſtles, *That the Miracles which they ſhould ſoon ſee him perform, would declare the Divine Majeſty preſent with him, and giving him ſuch Commands; as he was to execute in his prophetic Office, as clearly and manifeſtly as if they had ſeen the Angels of God*, aſcending and deſcending on him.

IT is obſerved by ſeveral, that only *Ezekiel* in the *Old Teſtament*, and our Saviour in the *New*, are called by the Name of *the Son of Man*; that our Saviour is never ſo called, but by himſelf; and that this is the common Appellation that he gives himſelf. *Ezekiel* was doubtleſs ſo called, to diſtinguiſh him from thoſe ſpiritual Beings, with whom he ſo frequently converſed: And our Saviour took upon him that Title, not only to diſtinguiſh his human from his divine Nature, but to expreſs his Humility likewiſe, and want of Reputation, while he continued in the Form of a Servant. *Chemnitius*, however, puts another Conſtruction upon this Title: He thinks, that as the Term *Meſſiah* (which is commonly called *Chriſt*) was taken out of *Daniel*, ſo that other of the Son of Man is taken from thence likewiſe; for behold one *like the Son of Man* (ſays the *Prophet*) *came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Antient of Days*, Chap. vii. 13. and that therefore our Saviour did uſually call himſelf ſo, in Compliance to the Prophecy, as well as to aſſert his Humanity, and declare himſelf his Father's Servant, according to the Character given of them by *Iſaiah* xlii. 1.

IN all Probability it was at ſome Relation's Houſe, that the Marriage of *Cana* in *Galilee* was kept, becauſe *Mary* was ſo ſolicitous for the Supply of Wine; and the Opinion of the Antients is, that it was at the Houſe of *Alphæus* or *Cleopas*, who, at this Time married his Son *Simon* the *Canaanite*, Matt. x. 4. though others will have it, that the Bridegroom was *Nathanael*.

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THE City *Capernaum* is no where mentioned in the *Old Teſtament*, either under this, or any Name like it; and therefore it is not improbable, that it was one of thoſe Towns which the *Jews* built after their Return from the *Babyloniſh* Captivity. It ſtood on the Sea-Coaſt, *i. e.* on the Coaſt of the *Sea of* Galilee, *in the Borders of* Zabulun *and* Nepthalim, *Matt.* iv. 15, 16. and conſequently towards the upper Part thereof. It took its Name, no doubt, from an adjacent Spring of great Repute for its clear and limpid Waters, and which, according to *Joſephus*, is by the Natives called *Capernaum*. As this Spring might be ſome Inducement for the Building of the Town in the Place where it ſtood, ſo its being a convenient Wafting-place, from *Galilee* to any Parts on the other Side of the Sea, might be ſome Motive to our Lord for his moving from *Nazareth*, and making this the Place of his moſt conſtant Reſidence. Upon this Account *Capernaum* was highly honoured, and is called, by our Lord himſelf, *exalted unto Heaven*, but becauſe it made no right Uſe of this ſignal Favour, it drew from him the ſevere Denunciation, that it ſhould *be brought down to Hell*, Matt. xi. 23. which has abundantly been verified; for ſo far is it from being the Metropolis of all *Galilee*, (as it was once) that it conſiſted, long ſince, of no more than ſix Fiſhermen's Cottages, and may perhaps be now totally deſolate.

THE Feaſt of the Paſſover is ſo well known, and has been ſo fully explained at the Time of its firſt Inſtitution, *Exod.* xii. that we need only remind our Reader, that from the Word *Paſach*, which ſignifies to *leap* or *ſkip over*, the *Jews* gave the Name of *Paſcha* or *Paſſover*, to that great Feſtival which was annually appointed in Commemoration of their Coming forth out of *Egypt*, becauſe, the Night before their Departure, the deſtroying Angel, who ſlew the Firſt-born of the *Egyptians*, paſſed over the Houſes of the *Iſraelites*, which were

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marked with the Blood of the Lamb killed the Evening before, and for this Reaſon called the *Paſchal Lamb*. The Feaſt itſelf began on the fourteenth Day of *Niſan*, which is the firſt Month in their ſacred, but the ſeventh in the civil Year, and anſwers, in Part, to our *March* and *April*; but as the *Jews* began their Days at ſix in the Evening, this Feaſt was to continue ſeven Days compleat, and ſo ended on the one and twentieth Day in the Evening.

As ſoon as our Saviour came to *Jeruſalem*, the firſt Thing he did, was to reform the publick Abuſe and Profanation of the Temple, occaſioned by the Shops which the Money-changers had ſet up, and the Beaſts which the Dealers therein uſed to bring into the Court of the *Gentiles*. This our Lord's Zeal for his Father's Honour could not well brook; and therefore, with a Scourge made of Cords, he drove all the Sellers and Barterers from the ſacred Ground, overturned the Tables of the Money-changers, and commanded thoſe who dealt in Doves or Pidgeons, to take away their Goods, and *make his Father's Houſe no longer a Houſe of Merchandize*.

THIS extraordinary Procedure incenſed the *Jews* to ſuch a Degree, that they came and demanded of him, by what Authority he did theſe Things, and to give them ſome Evidence of his having a Commiſſion ſo to do: But to this he made no other Reply, than by foretelling his own Reſurrection, expreſſed in the Metaphor *of the Temple*, which they underſtood of the Temple at *Jeruſalem*, that had been ſix and forty Years a building, but he, of the Temple of his own Body, which, in three Days after they had ſlain it, he promiſed to revive. Though therefore, at this Time, he refuſed to work any Miracle at the Inſtigation of the *Jews*, yet, ſhortly after, we find him working many, which ſurprized the whole City, and excited the Curioſity of one Perſon in particular, whoſe Name was *Nicodemus*, a conſiderable Man in the Grand *Sanhedrim*, and

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of the Sect of the *Phariſees*) to repair to him (but privately, and in the Night-time, for fear of being known) and to declare freely to him, *That he verily believed he was come immediately from Heaven, becauſe the Miracles which he wrought were a Demonſtration of it.*

HEREUPON our bleſſed Saviour took Occaſion to let him know, that this Belief was not the only Qualification requiſite to become his Diſciple, and then proceeded to inſtruct him in the Myſtery of Regeneration, telling him, "That as no Production "could tranſcend the Nature and Condition of its "Parent *Fleſh*, for Inſtance, though never ſo much "diverſified, could ſtill produce no more than "Fleſh; ſo this Formation of a new Creature was "to be effected by different Principles, namely, by "the Water of Baptiſm, waſhing away Sins, and "by the holy Spirit giving a Power and Efficacy to "Mens Endeavours to do well; which Spirit *blow-*"*eth where it liſteth*, and is, as the Wind, certain "and notorious in its Effects, but ſecret in the "Principle and Manner of its Production."

THIS Doctrine of Regeneration (which to *Nicodemus* ſeemed ſo very abſtruſe) our Saviour proceeds to tell him, was no more, in reſpect of other Myſteries of the Goſpel, than the Earth is in Compariſon of the Heavens, and ſo goes on to acquaint them with Matters of a ſublimer Nature; with his Deſcent from Heaven, his Death, his Aſcenſion, and the Bleſſing of that Redemption, which he came into the World to accompliſh. He inſtructs him in the Love of the Father, the Miſſion of the Son, the Rewards of Faith, and the Glories of Eternity. He upbraids the Unbelieving and Impenitent, and declares the Difference between a pure and corrupt Conſcience, the Shame and Fears of the one, and the Confidence and Serenity of the other.

THIS is the Subſtance of our Saviour's Diſcourſe to *Nicodemus*, who afterwards proved a Convert; and

and no ſooner was the Paſſover ended, but our Lord, in Company with many of his Diſciples, who, by his miraculous Works, were convinced of his Divinity, went about the Province of *Judea*, making Proſelytes wherever he came, and cauſing them to be baptized by the Hands of his Diſciples, becauſe himſelf was employed in greater Affairs, *viz.* in teaching the People, and relieving their Neceſſities.

JOHN the Baptiſt had, at this Time, removed his Station from *Bethabara* to *Ænon*, a Place remarkable (as its Name imports) for Springs and Waters, and therefore of great Conveniency for baptizing. While he was there, a Diſpute happened to ariſe between his Diſciples and certain *Jews*, who were preſent, which of the Baptiſms, that of *John*, or that of *Jeſus*, was preferable? And when his Diſciples, by way of Appeal to *John*, came and acquainted him, that the Perſon of whom he had given ſuch honourable Teſtimony, received Proſelytes (and that in vaſt Numbers) by the ſame Ceremony of Baptiſm as he did, *John* repeated the ſame Teſtimony again, and reminded his Diſciples, how frequently he had told them, "That the Perſon, of "whom they ſpake, was the *Meſſiah*, whom God "had ſent into the World for the Salvation of Man-"kind, and himſelf no more than his Herald; and "that his Miniſtry therefore was now going to de-"cline, even as, upon the Approach of the Sun, "the Glory of the Morning-Star, decreaſes." And having ſaid many Things of the like Nature, to prove *Jeſus* to be the Son of God, and of Coequality with the Father, he cloſed up his Commiſſion with theſe important Words, *He that believes on the Son, hath everlaſting Life; but he that believeth not on the Son, ſhall not ſee Life, but the Wrath of God abideth on him.*

JOHN was at this Time in the Territories of *Herod Antipas*, and, as he was a Man of great Free-

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dom of Speech upon all Occaſions, he was not afraid, when he came to *Herod*'s Court, to reprove him for his many Enormities, and particularly for his cohabiting with *Herodias*, the Wife of his Brother *Philip*, who was ſtill living. This exaſperated the Woman againſt him, to ſuch a Degree, that, though *Herod* at firſt, had ſome Eſteem and Reverence for him, yet, by her malicious Inſtigation, ſhe prevailed with him to caſt him into Priſon, with a Purpoſe to have him deſtroyed, whenever ſhe could find out a proper Opportunity.

LET us now explain the foregoing Paſſages.

THERE were three Courts belonging to the Temple. The Court of the Prieſts, where the Altar of Incenſe ſtood: The Court of the *Iſraelites*, where *Jews*, that were clean, and the Proſelytes of Juſtice, *i. e.* thoſe who had embraced Circumciſion, and the whole Law of *Moſes*, met at their Devotion; and the Court of the *Gentiles*, where the unclean *Jews*, and the *Gentiles*, who owned the true God, without profeſſing *Judaiſm*, were permitted to come and worſhip. Now, under the ſame Pretext of having the Sacrifices near at hand, as well as out of a Contempt of that Court, where the *Gentile* Worſhippers were permitted to enter, the Prieſts for their ſordid Gain, had permitted Beaſts and Poultry to be brought within this Court, and Graziers and Huckſters (whoſe Buſineſs properly was in the Markets of *Jeruſalem*) to mix with People at their Devotions, which was an Abuſe notoriouſly ſcandalous.

IT may poſſibly be aſked how our bleſſed Lord, with nothing but a Whip in his Hand, ſhould be able to execute this heroic Act upon a Multitude of People, who might ſuffer Damage in their Wares, and conſequently be in a Diſpoſition to reſiſt him? Now, whoever conſiders that our Saviour had done enough already to prove himſelf a Prophet ſent from God, and that the general Conceſſion was, that a Prophet thus ſent, had ſufficient Authority to rectify

Diſorders; and if he remembers, at the ſame Time, the great Reverence that was conſtantly paid to the Temple, and what Titles of Honour and Reſpect were given it by God himſelf, cannot but allow, that the preſent Abuſe of it was abominable, our Saviour's Zeal in redreſſing it commendable; and that, from all thinking and diſintereſted Perſons, it would, conſequently meet with Countenance and Approbation: Nor is it to be doubted, but that a Conſciouſneſs of Guilt, in the Profaners themſelves, might, in ſome Meaſure, contribute to their Submiſſion and Acquieſcence; even in the ſame Manner as his Enemies were ſtruck backwards, with a Senſe of their own Guilt, as well as the Majeſty of his Appearance, and fell down to the Ground, when they came to apprehend him in the Garden, *John* xviii. 6.

IT was an Appointment of the Law, that every Man from twenty Years old and upwards, ſhould annually pay into the Treaſury of the Temple, in order to defray the Expence of the daily Sacrifices, the Sum of half a Shekel, *Exod.* xxx. 12, 13. This and the voluntary Oblations of People of all Ranks, occaſioned a Neceſſity of changing greater Coin into leſs, and very often of foreign Coin into that which was current in the Nation. Under the Pretence therefore of having Things near at Hand, the Prieſts took this Opportunity to gratify their Covetouſneſs, by letting out Places to Money-Changers, who, to make up their Rent (which very likely was exorbitant) might extort from thoſe who came to them, or, (as *Origen* imagines) give them baſe Money inſtead of good, and to make the Temple a Den of Thieves.

WHETHER it were the Prieſts, the Magiſtrates, or the common People, that put this Queſtion to our Saviour, it is certain that they do not in the leaſt pretend to juſtify the Profanation, which he had thus reformed; and therefore their Principle ſeems to have been, "That let Corruptions and Abuſes

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" in a Church be never ſo great, yet they were not " to be reformed, but either by the ordinary Autho- " rity of the Magiſtrate, or by an extraordinary Au- " thority from God. Such an Authority they were " ready to acknowledge in Prophets; but then " they inſiſted that thoſe, who pretended to this, " and to have their Miſſion from God, ſhould be " able to prove that Miſſion by ſome miraculous " Operations." But how they came to put this Queſtion to our Lord, after they had ſeen his Miracles, and knew that he claimed a divine Commiſſion, and had been told, *that the Works he had done in his Father's Name bore Witneſs of him*, John v. 36. can be imputed to nothing but their Perverſeneſs and obſtinate Infidelity.

FROM *Herod*'s beginning to rebuild the Temple, to the firſt Paſſover after our Saviour's Baptiſm, 'tis agreed, that the Time was exactly ſix and forty Years; but then *Joſephus* tells us, that the whole was finiſhed in nine Years and an Half. But this is to be underſtood of the grand Building only, ſince (according to the ſame Author) ſeveral new Works and Decorations were ſtill carrying on, and about eighteen Thouſand Men employed therein, even to the Time that young *Agrippa* was made King of *Judea*, which was about the ſixtieth Year of the *Chriſtian Æra*.

THE *Jews* had a Maxim, or proverbial Speech among them, that the *Sanctuary of Sanctuaries was the Meſſiah*, and therefore there could be no Impropriety in our Saviour's calling his Body a Temple: For, if the Apoſtle calls our Bodies *the Temple of God*, as he does, 1 *Cor.* iii. 16. and 2 *Cor.* vi. 1, 6. how much more does that Title belong to the Body of *Chriſt*, in which *the Fulneſs of the Godhead dwelt* always, and inſeparably?

BUT are Miracles alone a Demonſtration of a Perſon's being ſent by God? *Nicodemus* was not ignorant of the Caution which *Moſes* had given the

againſt falſe Prophets, *Deut.* xiii. 1, *&c.* nor does he here ſpeak of Miracles in general, but of thoſe particular ones which *Jeſus* had done in the Time of the Paſſover; and theſe were ſo great in their Nature, ſo ſolid in their Proof, ſo beneficial in their Effects, and in their End ſo well deſigned to confirm a Doctrine, every way ſuitable to the divine Attributes, and to fulfil the Prophecies concerning the *Meſſiah, the Son of Righteouſneſs, who was to riſe with healing in his Wings*, Mal. iv. 2. that there was the greateſt Aſſurance, that none, without an omnipotent Hand could do them. Not to ſay, that *Nicodemus* might have both examined the Doctrine, and enquired into the Life of *Jeſus*, before he made that Inference from his Miracles.

SOME have imagined, from the ſeeming Abruptneſs of the Anſwer, which our Lord gives *Nicodemus*, that *Nicodemus* might have ſome previous Queſtion to him (not recorded by the *Evangeliſt*) concerning the Means of attaining the Kingdom of God, *i. e.* eternal Happineſs, or of qualifying himſelf to be a Diſciple of the *Meſſiah*, for, in that Senſe the Kingdom of God is likewiſe taken. But (beſides that the Word *anſwered* does not always, in the *New Teſtament*, ſignify a Reply to a Queſtion already propounded, but very frequently no more, than the Beginning of a new Speech) the Connection, between the Compliment which *Nicodemus* makes our Lord, and our Lord's Reply to it, will not be amiſs, if we can but ſuppoſe in the Words this Implication: — "Thy Acknowledgment of my divine "Miſſion and Authority, free and generous though "it be, will not be ſufficient to render thee a Mem-"ber of that Kingdom which I am going to ſet up; "for, *except a Man be born again*, i. e. renewed in "his Mind, Will, and Affections, by the Operati-"on of the Holy Ghoſt, and ſo become a new "Creature, *he cannot ſee the Kingdom of God, i. e.*

"he

" he cannot be a *Chriſtian* here, or a Saint here-
" after."

THOSE who make the Water and the Spirit, here mentioned by our Saviour, one and the ſame Thing (which, to every common Reader, muſt, at firſt Sight, appear to be diſtinct) ſhould do well to conſider, that the Queſtion between *Chriſt* and *Nicodemus* was about what was requiſite to prepare a Man for *the Kingdom*, *i. e.* God's Church, and make him Partaker of the Goſpel Bleſſings. Certain it is, that Baptiſm by Water was not only the common Method of receiving Proſelytes into the *Jewiſh* Church, but is declared likewiſe by our Lord himſelf to be the ordinary Way of entering into his Kingdom, for *he that believeth and is baptized*, ſays he, *ſhall be ſaved*, Mark xvi. 16. and therefore he gave Commiſſion to his Apoſtles *to make Diſciples in all Nations by baptizing them*, Matth. xxviii. 19. Nay, ſo far are the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Spirit from ſuperſeding the Neceſſity of this Ordinance, that, in the Apoſtolick Age, we find them rather eſteemed a proper Pre-diſpoſition for it. For, when the Holy Ghoſt fell upon *Cornelius* and his Company, in the ſame Manner that it fell upon the Apoſtles, in the Day of *Pentecoſt*, *Acts* xxxiv. 44, what is St. *Peter*'s Inference from theſe miraculous Gifts? Is it that the Perſons, on whom they reſted, had no need of Baptiſm? No, but rather that theſe extraordinary Gifts were a full Evidence, that they were the proper Objects of it, for *can any one*, ſays he, *forbid Water, that theſe ſhould not be baptized?* So far is the *Baptiſm of the Spirit* (even where it is undeniable) from excluding the *Baptiſm of Water*; and ſo ſtrong a Proof is the Inſtance before us, that the Graces of the Spirit may be the Foundation of a juſt Claim to Baptiſm, but never (where the Sacrament can be had) a lawful Diſpenſation to any Man for the Refuſal or Neglect of it.

OUR

OUR Bleſſed Saviour might well wonder at *Nicodemus*'s Ignorance in the Point of Regeneration, when this was the common Notion of Proſelytiſm among the *Jews*, that he who was waſhed and circumciſed, was looked upon as a *recens natus*, an *Infant new born*: And when there were ſo many Paſſages in the Law and the Prophets, relating to this very Doctrine: for what elſe can the Meaning be of the *Circumciſion of the Heart*, commanded by *Moſes*, Deut. x. 16. of the *Renewal of a clean and right Spirit*, prayed for by *David*, Pſal. li. 10. of the *putting God's Law in the inward Parts*, mentioned by *Jeremiah*, Chap. xxxi. 33. and the giving his People a new Heart, and a new Spirit, promiſed by God, *Ezek.* xxxvi. 26? Theſe, and many more, were Intimations of the Doctrine of Regeneration; but the *Phariſees* were ſo taken up with their Rites and Traditions, that they gave ſmall Attention to the ſpiritual Things of nearer and much greater Concernment to their Souls.

THE *Evangeliſt* does no-where mention the particular Place where our Saviour began his Baptiſm, but there is Reaſon to preſume, that it was ſomewhere about *Jericho*, becauſe there it was that *John the Baptiſt* firſt entered upon his Miniſtry; and becauſe it ſeems expedient, that he ſhould open the firſt Scene of his Office, where his faithful Fore-runner had given ſuch glorious and advantageous Teſtimonies of him; and, in one and the ſame Place, compleat *John*'s Baptiſm of *Repentance for Sins* (which was preparatory to his Coming) by the Baptiſm of *Remiſſion of Sins*, which he alone had proper Power to give.

THIS *Antipas*, or *Antipater* (for they are Words of the ſame Signification) was the Son of *Herod the Great*, by one of his Wives named *Cleopatra*, a Native of *Jeruſalem*. In his firſt Will his Father, it is certain, named him Succeſſor to his Kingdom, but afterwards he changed his Mind, made his Son

Archelaus

Archelaus King of *Judea*, and gave to *Antipas* the Title only of *Tetrarch* of *Galilee* and *Peræa*, which made him appeal to *Auguſtus* at *Rome*, in order to have his Father's former Will confirmed and the latter reverſed, but he did not obtain his End.

HERODIAS was the Daughter of *Ariſtobulus* and *Bernice*, Siſter to King *Agrippa*, and Granddaughter to *Herod the Great*. She was, at firſt, married to her Uncle *Philip*, Son of the ſame *Herod* by *Mariamne*, by whom ſhe had a Daughter named *Salome*, the ſame who pleaſed *Herod* ſo well in her dancing; and, how ſhe came to run from her Brother to live with another, *Joſephus* has thus related the Story, "*Antipas*, in his Paſſage to *Rome*, made "ſome Stay with his Brother *Philip* where he fell ſo "paſſionately in Love with his Wife *Herodias*, that "he could not forbear expreſſing it to her, and "promiſed her withal, that at his Return from "*Rome* he would put away his own Wife and marry her. Upon theſe Conditions *Herodias* accepted "of the Offer, and as ſoon as *Antipas* was returned, "and his Wife gone (for ſhe having Notice of the "Engagement between her Huſband and *Herodias*, "made her Eſcape to her Father *Aretas* King of "*Petra*) ſhe, with her Daughter *Salome*, left her "Huſband *Philip*, and coming directly to *Antipas*, "for ever after lived with him in a State of Inceſt, "*Lev.* xviii. 15. nor was her Ambition much leſs "criminal than her Luſt; for, growing uneaſy to "ſee her Brother *Agrippa* promoted to the Title of a "King, while her new Huſband had no more than "that of a *Tetrarch*, ſhe preſſed him ſo much that "he determined to make a Journey to *Rome*, with "an Intention to aſk the like Dignity of *Caligula* the "Emperor; but the Emperor, being prejudiced by "ſeveral Letters which *Agrippa* had written againſt "*Antipas*, inſtead of advancing him, deprived him "of his *Tetrarchy*, and condemned him to perpetual "Baniſhment." The Emperor, underſtanding that

Herodias

Herodias was *Agrippa*'s Sister, shewed an Inclination to pardon her; but she chose rather to follow her Husband in the Calamity she had brought upon him, than to owe any Thing to her Brother's Fortune; so that they were both confiscated, and banished together, first into *France*, and afterwards into *Spain*, where they died.

THE *Evangelists* have assigned the true Reason for the *Baptist*'s Imprisonment; but, since the *Pharisees*, very probably, represented him as an Author of a Sect, a Promoter of Seditions and Rebellions, and a Person dangerous to the Government, by Reason of the Multitude of his Followers, *Antipas* craftily made this Pretence (as appears from *Josephus*, lib. xviii. cap. 7.) for confining him; and the better to remove him from the People, sent him bound out of *Galilee* into *Patrea*, to a strong Castle called *Macherus*, near the *Dead-Sea*, and towards the Borders of *Arabia*, where he continued above a Year in Prison.

LET us now return to the Story.

ABOUT the Time of *John*'s Imprisonment, our Lord, who, by the Hands of his Apostles had been baptizing for near seven or eight Months in *Judea*, understanding that the *Pharisees* began to be envious at him, for the great Multitudes of People that resorted to him, resolved to leave that Province and pass into *Galilee*, in order to enter upon the more solemn Part of his ministerial Function. In this Journey it was necessary for him to pass through *Samaria*; and, as he travelled on Foot, and the Weather was hot, when he came within a little of *Sychar* he sent his Disciples into the City to buy Provisions, and sat himself down by the Side of a famous Well, called *Jacob*'s Well.

WHILE he was sitting there, a Woman of a loose Life and Conversation came out of the City to draw Water; and when he requested some of her to drink, she, perceiving that he was a *Jew*, took the Freedom to ask him, how he could offer any such Request to a *Samaritan*,

Samaritan, ſince there were ſo great Feuds, and ſo little Dealings between them and the *Jews*? Little did the Woman know the Excellency of the Perſon who aſked her ſo ſmall a Favour; but, in ſome meaſure to convince her, our Lord took Occaſion from hence, under the Metaphor of Water, to diſcourſe to her of ſpiritual Bleſſings, and to make her ſenſible of his Omniſcience, he reminded her of ſome Paſſages of her Life, particularly of the five Times ſhe had been divorced for her Adulteries, and of the State of Fornication, wherein ſhe then lived.

CONVINCED by this Diſcovery that he was a Prophet, ſhe propounded to him the great Queſtion, ſo much controverted between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, *viz.* which was the proper Place of publick Worſhip, *Gerizim* or *Jeruſalem*? To which our Saviour, in his Anſwer, gives manifeſtly the Preference to the *Jewiſh* Form and Place of Worſhip, but makes it a Queſtion of no great Moment, ſince the Time was approaching when all Sacrifices and ceremonial Rites ſhould ceaſe, and when God, who was a Spirit, expected to be worſhipped in a more rational and ſpiritual Manner, than hitherto he had been.

OUR Saviour, before he had done talking with the Woman, and juſt as his Diſciples were returned from the City, had informed her, that himſelf was the *Meſſiah*, whom ſhe ſpoke of; whereupon, leaving her Water-pots, ſhe ran into the City, proclaiming aloud, that ſhe had met with a Perſon, who had told her all the Secrets of her Life, and who could be no other than that great Prophet, who was to come into the World? ſo that the Inhabitants waited on him at the Well, invited him into their City, received him with great Civility, and, though ſome believed on him from the Teſtimony of the Woman, many more did ſo from their own Conviction, hearing his Sermons and Divine Diſcourſes.

AFTER two Days Stay in the City our Lord proceeded to *Cana*, where he changed the Water into

Wine, and where the *Galileans*, who at the Paſſover had ſeen the Miracles which he did at *Jeruſalem*, received him with great Reverence and Reſpect. Hither it was that an Officer belonging to the Court, came and addreſſed himſelf to him with great Humility and Reverence, deſiring him that he would come and cure his Son, who was juſt at the Point of Death; and when, with more Importunity, he renewed his Requeſt, and our Lord, to ſhew the Excellency of his Power, that could cure in Abſence as well as in Preſence, diſmiſſed him with this kind Aſſurance, *that his Son was recovered*; the believing Father joyfully returning home, was, by the Way, congratulated with the welcome News of his Son's Recovery; and enquiring of his Servants the Hour when the Child began to amend, by the Account which they gave him he perceived, that it was at the very Inſtant when *Jeſus* had declared to him, *thy Son is well*: Whereupon both he and his whole Family, being convinced of our Saviour's Divinity, were converted to the *Chriſtian* Faith.

SEVERAL Reaſons may be aſſigned why our Saviour delegated the Office of baptizing to his Apoſtles. 1. Becauſe it was no ways proper for him to baptize *in his own Name*. 2. Becauſe the Baptiſm that was peculiarly his, was the *Baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt*, Acts xv. 3. Becauſe it was an Office of more Importance to preach the Goſpel than to baptize, 1 *Cor.* i. 17. And, 4. Becauſe *Chriſt*'s baptizing of any might poſſibly have occaſioned Diſguſts and Jealouſies among the Diſciples, in the ſame Manner, as, in the early Ages of the Church, we find People valuing themſelves, and deſpiſing others, upon their being baptized by ſuch or ſuch an eminent Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* i. 12.

GALILEE is a Province of *Paleſtine*, which extends itſelf chiefly into the *Northern* Parts thereof. The Tribes which it contains, are *Iſſachar*, *Zebulun*, *Naphtali*, and *Aſher*, with Part (as ſome ſay) of

Dan

Dan and *Paræa*, beyond the River *Jordan*. On the *North*, it is bounded by *Lebanon* and *Syria*; on the *Weſt*, by *Phœnicia*; on the *South*, by *Samaria*; and on the *Eaſt* moſtly by the River *Jordan* and the *Sea of Galilee*. It is generally divided into two Parts, the *Upper*, and the *Lower Galilee*, whereof the former is called *Galilee of the Gentiles*, Matt. iv. 15. either becauſe it was chiefly poſſeſſed by the *Gentiles*, with *Jews* interſperſed among them, or rather, becauſe it bordered upon *Gentile* Nations, ſuch as the *Phœnicians*, *Syrians*, and *Arabians*. The whole Country (according to *Joſephus*) was fruitful and well cultivated, and the People laborious and induſtrious. The Number of its Towns and Villages was prodigious great, and ſo well inhabited, that the leaſt of them did not contain leſs than fifteen Thouſand Souls. The Natives were a bold intrepid Race of Men, who defended themſelves bravely againſt the foreign Nations that ſurrounded them, but then their Wealth and Proweſs made them ſeditious, and very apt to rebel againſt the *Romans*, for which they ſuffered ſometimes very much.

SAMARIA is a Province of *Paleſtine* (ſo called from its City of the ſame Name, which was once the Capital of the Kingdom of *Iſrael*) which lies exactly between *Judea* to the *South*, and *Galilee* to the *North*, and extends itſelf from the *Mediterranean* Sea Weſtward, to the River *Jordan* Eaſtward, taking up the moſt conſiderable Part of what formerly belonged to the Tribe of *Ephraim*, and the Half-tribe of *Manaſſeh*, on the Weſt-ſide of *Jordan*.

SYCHAR is only a corrupt Pronunciation of *Sychem* or *Shechem*, which is the Capital of the Country that was once called *Samaria*. At preſent it is called *Naploſa*, and ſtands in a narrow Valley, between Mount *Gerizim* on the *South* (at the Foot of which it is ſituate) and *Ebal* on the *North*. On Mount *Gerizim* they had once a Temple which ſeemed to rival that of *Jeruſalem*, but in the Time of

the *Maccabees* it was deſtroyed by *Hyrcanus*, and what they have now is only a little Place of Worſhip, to which, at certain Seaſons, they nevertheleſs repair for the Performance of the Rites of their Religion; but what thoſe Rites are, 'tis not eaſy to ſay. The whole Place, in ſhort, is ſtrangely decayed from what it was anciently; for it conſiſts now only of two Streets that lie parallel under Mount *Gerizim*, but is full of Inhabitants, and the Seat of a *Baſſa*.

IT is much to be queſtioned, whether the *Well*, that is at preſent ſhown to Travellers for *Jacob*'s *Well*, be that where our Saviour diſcourſed the *Samaritan* Woman, becauſe it ſeems to be too remote from the Town for Women to come thither to draw Water: unleſs we may ſuppoſe that the City did formerly extend itſelf farther that Way, than it does now. However this be, the Well is covered with a ſmall Vault, into which you get down through a very ſtreight Hole, and then, removing a broad flat Stone, you diſcover the Mouth of the Well itſelf. It is dug in a firm Rock, about three Yards in Diameter, and thirty-five in Depth; and, to confute the Story which is commonly told to Travellers (that it is all the Year dry, except on the *Anniverſary*, when our Saviour ſat upon it, but that then it bubbles up with Abundance of Water) Mr. *Maundrel* tells us, that when they came to ſound it, they found no leſs than five Yards of Water in it.

THE chief Reaſons of the *Jewiſh* Hatred againſt the *Samaritans* were theſe three, 1. The foreign Extraction of the *Samaritans*, they being moſt of them Deſcendants from the *Cutheans*, whom *Salmanezar* ſent to *Samaria*, when he carried away the Ten Tribes into Captivity, 2 *Kings* xviii. 9. 2. The Difference of their Religion and Worſhip, foraſmuch as that of the *Samaritans* was a Kind of Mixture of *Jewiſh* and *Pagan* Rites together; and, 3. The *Rival* Temple which the *Samaritans* had built on Mount *Gerizim*, and conſecrated to *Jupiter Olympus*, in order to avoid

the

the Perſecution of *Antiochus*, *Joſeph. Antiq.* l. xii. c. 7. Theſe were the chief Cauſes of the Animoſities between them; the *Jews* however did not carry their Reſentments ſo high, but that, in ſome Caſes, they would traffick or buy any Thing of them, but then the *Phariſees* came in with a Tradition, that they were not to borrow any Thing of them, or receive any Kindneſs from them, nor drink of their Water, or eat of their Morſels. This however our Lord deſpiſed, as having no Foundation either in the Law of God or Equity, and as tending to impair the Law of common Friendſhip and Humanity, and therefore we find him aſking to drink with the *Samaritan* Woman, and afterwards going into the City and eating with the *Sichemites*.

THE Words, *thou haſt had five Huſbands*; but whether five ſucceſſively, and from the Death of one another, or five from whom ſhe had been divorced for Adultery, is not agreed. The beſt modern Interpreters however judge, that ſhe had been married to five ſeveral Men, but ſo behaved herſelf towards them, that, for her Adultery, or ſome other froward Behaviour, they had given her a Bill of Divorce. This ſeems more likely to be the true Senſe, than that, after the Death of five legal Huſbands, ſhe ſhould live in Whoredom with a ſixth Perſon.

THE *Jews* gave it out, that the *Samaritans* worſhipped God in the Image of a Dove, but this ſeems to be a mere Forgery upon them, 1. Becauſe among all the Idols which they worſhipped, when they came from *Aſſyria*, there is not the leaſt Hint of the Image of a Dove. 2. Becauſe *Joſephus*, who, in ſeveral Places of his Hiſtory, inveighs againſt them bitterly, does no where charge them with this Crime: And, 3. Becauſe it is a Thing utterly inconſiſtent with the Law of *Moſes*, which they embraced; for, as it forbids all Images, ſo it requires Men to ſacrifice the Dove to God; and ſurely nothing can be more abſurd

abſurd, than to worſhip that which we are bound to ſacrifice. 'Twas very likely therefore, that the *Samaritans* had no falſe Objects of Worſhip among them, and yet they, as well as the *Jews*, might not be furniſhed with right Apprehenſions of the true One. They both were to blame, no doubt, in confining the Worſhip of God to any particular Place, and thinking that he could not be rightly adored, but either at *Gerizim*, according to the one, or at *Jeruſalem*, according to the other, when his Preſence is certainly every where, and in every Nation, *he, that feareth him, and worketh Righteouſneſs, is accepted with him*, Acts x. 35. They, as well as the *Jews*, might think, that God was pleaſed with outward Ordinances, with Sacrifices and Expiations, which *ſanctified only to the purifying of the Fleſh*; but perhaps they never ſuppoſed, that theſe Things were but Types and Figures of what was to ſucceed, and therefore to be of no longer Continuance than until the *Subſtance of the Things themſelves were come*. They, doubtleſs, both had ſome Expectations of a *Meſſiah*, but perhaps it never entered into their Heads, that he ſhould be the Angel of the Covenant, who, with the Incenſe of his Blood, *ſhould offer up the Prayers of all the Saints upon the Altar, that is before the Throne*, Rev. viii. 3. So that our Saviour, by this Part of his Diſcourſe with the Woman, plainly intimates, that, after his Reſurrection, and the Promulgation of his Goſpel, not only the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, but People of all Nations whatever, ſhould have righter Notions of God, the only Object of religious Worſhip, of the Extent and Univerſality of his Church, of the Qualifications requiſite in true Worſhippers, and of the Mediator, appointed by God to introduce and enforce their Prayers.

THE Impriſonment of *John* had put an End to his Miniſtry; and therefore, to ſupply that Loſs, our Saviour himſelf began to preach the Sum and

Subſtance

Subſtance of the Goſpel, *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Repentance*, in the Province of *Galilee*; which he did in ſuch an extraordinary Manner, that he was admired by all, and his Fame ſpread through the whole Country. Coming however to *Nazareth*, the Place of his Education, he went into the Synagogue on the *Sabbath-day*, and when he ſtood up, and read (as the Cuſtom for Laymen was at that Time) a Paſſage in the Prophet *Iſaiah*, beginning with theſe Words, *The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, becauſe he hath anointed me to preach the Goſpel to the Poor*, &c. which he applied to himſelf (but in general Terms) and ſpake thereupon with ſo much Gracefulneſs, that the Eyes of the whole Congregration were turned upon him, admiring his Diſcourſe; many, who had known him in the Diſadvantages of his Education, began to have abject Thoughts of him upon the Meanneſs of his Extract, as if he had been no more than a *Carpenter*'s Son; ſo that, taking an Occaſion to upbraid them with their Ingratitude and Inſenſibility, he ſo far provoked the whole Aſſembly, that they hurried him out of the City, and brought him to the Brow of the Hill on which it was built, with a Deſign to have caſt him down from thence, and deſtroyed him, had not he, by a miraculous Power, withdrawn himſelf from the Fury of theſe wretched People, and left their City.

THIS barbarous Treatment of the *Nazarenes* made our Saviour remove from them, and ſettle his Habitation in *Capernaum*, which was the Metropolis of *Galilee*, and, by Reaſon of the Lake which was near it, a Place highly convenient for his Deſigns. He had not long been here before great Multitudes flocked to him; and as he was walking one Day by the Side of the Lake, with a Crowd of People preſſing upon him, he ſaw two Fiſhing-Veſſels, one belonging to *Peter* and *Andrew*, and the other to *James* and *John*, (who were all Partners and Companions in that Buſineſs) and ſtepping into *Peter*'s Ship, he

deſired

desired him to put a little from the Shore, that from thence he might preach to the People.

THAT the *Synagogue-worship* was, at this Time, loaded with Rites and Ceremonies of human Invention, that the Priests were very defective in the Discharge of their Functions, and the Manners of those who met there were very much corrupted, no one can doubt, who is at all acquainted with the Scriptures and the *Jewish* History; and yet we find, that our Saviour and his Disciples (as Members of the Church of *Nazareth*) went constantly every *Sabbath-day* to these Synagogues, preserving thereby *the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace*, and, upon slight Pretences, *not forsaking the assembling of themselves together, as the Manner of some is*, Heb. x. 15.

WHAT the Nature and Design of Synagogues were, and at what Time, and upon what Occasion they were at first erected by the *Jews*, is plain from their Use and Institution, and we need only take Notice here, that though every Synagogue had a settled Reader, to whom was allowed an annual Stipend, yet when any grave and learned Person came in (especially if he was a Stranger) it was customary to make him the Compliment of reading the Portion of Scripture appointed for the Day, *Acts* xiii. 15. which he always did in a standing Posture. For, *as the Law was given with Reverence*, say the *Jews*, *so it is to be handled with Reverence*; and when he had read what he thought fit, he might, if he was so disposed and qualified, expound or comment upon it. The Character, which *John the Baptist* had given of our Saviour, and the Miracles which he had lately done in *Cana* and *Capernaum*, might possibly excite the Curiosity of the Master of the Synagogue to hear him read and expound; read in *Hebrew*, and expound in *Chaldee*, as *Ezra* had introduced the Custom. In reading the Law, People were confined to the Lesson of the Day, but the *Rabbins* have observed, that in reading the Prophets there

there was a greater Licence allowed; and therefore, though our Saviour might read juſt where the Book opened, yet there ſeems to be a good deal of the Hand of God in directing him to a Place which related to himſelf, and gave him ſo fair an Opportunity of declaring the Purpoſe of his Coming into the World, *viz.* to publiſh Redemption and Liberty, Pardon and Reconciliation with God.

SUCH kind of popular Executions as the *Nazarenes* intended for our Saviour, when they would have caſt him from the Brow of the Hill, were then ſometimes tolerated; and, under Pretence of Zeal for the Law, ſeveral were put to Death (eſpecially in Times of publick Calamity, and when the *Jews* were in greateſt Diſtreſs) without the Formality of Juſtice. But what made the *Nazarenes* ſo exceeding outragious againſt our Saviour was, his declaring them unworthy of the Miracles he had done at *Capernaum*, his equalizing himſelf to ſome of the greateſt of the ancient Prophets, and, by the Inſtances of the *Sidonian* Woman, and *Naaman* the *Syrian*, plainly intimating, that his Goſpel would chiefly be received by the *Gentiles*.

How he got out of their Hands, when they had laid hold of him, the Scripture does not tell us; nor is it our Concern to be curious to enquire. We know very well that it was an eaſy Thing for him, who was God as well as Man, to quit himſelf of any mortal Enemies: But how he did it, whether it was by blinding them for the preſent, or making himſelf inviſible, or merely by allaying their Rage, and changing their Wills, 'tis impoſſible to determine. Which Way ſoever he did it, 'twas certainly ſomething miraculous, and therefore deprived the *Nazarenes* of the Liberty of complaining that he had done no Miracles among them.

THE Lake, to which our Saviour retired, when he left the *Nazarenes*, which (according to *Joſephus*) is forty Furlongs in Breadth, and in Length an hundred,

dred, was, in the Times of the *Old Teſtament*, called the *Sea of Chinnereth*, Numb. xxxiv. 11. but the Writers of the *New* have given it three different Appellations. For, as it is called the *Sea of Galilee*, from the Province of *Galilee* in general, ſo it is called *the Sea of Tiberias*, from a Town of that Name ſtanding on its weſtern Shore; and the *Lake of Geneſareth*, from that particular Tract of *Galilee*, which bounded it a great Way, on the weſtern Side. The Lake lies upon a Gravel, which makes its Water both of a good Colour and Taſte. It is ſofter than either Fountain or River Water, and withal ſo very cold, that it will not grow warm though ſet in the Sun in the hotteſt Seaſon of the Year. The River *Jordan* runs through the midſt of it, which ſtocks it with a great Variety of Fiſh, of a peculiar Taſte and Shape, not to be equalled in any other Place. In ſhort, it was a common Saying among the *Jews*, *that God loved the Sea of* Galilee *more than any other Sea*; which ſo far holds good, that this Sea, above all others, was honoured with the Divine Preſence of our bleſſed Saviour, while he dwelt at *Capernaum*, very frequently, and even once after he was riſen from the Dead.

ST. *MATTHEW* and St. *Mark*, in their Relations of this Tranſaction of *Chriſt*'s going into the Ship, are pretty uniform, but St. *Luke* differs from them ſo widely, that Interpreters have been at ſome Pains to reconcile them. For, whereas the two former tell us, that theſe Fiſhermen were *caſting a Net into the Sea*, St. *Luke* informs us, that *they had gone out of their Ships*, and had *waſhed their Nets*, beſides ſome other Variation in the Manner of the Call of the four Apoſtles. But not to enter into a minute Examination of Particulars, we ought to conſider, that ſome Allowances are reaſonable and neceſſary to be made, for the Variation of Circumſtances in one Hiſtorian, who makes it his Buſineſs to recount Matters diſtinctly, and at large, and in another,

another, whoſe Intention it is, only to declare Facts in general: without entering into the Series and Order of each Action, Now, this is the Caſe of the two former Evangeliſts: They deſigned no more than a ſummary Account of theſe four Apoſtles Call, and their Compliance with it; and therefore they contented themſelves with ſetting down apart, ſo much firſt, as relates to *Andrew* and *Peter*, and afterwards what related to *James* and *John*. But St. *Luke*, who propoſes to ſhew the Manner and whole Proceſs of the Call, records the Miracle at large, and interweaves ſeveral remarkable Paſſages, which were not needful to be mentioned in the brief Account of St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, but highly conducive to St. *Luke*'s Purpoſe of undertaking to deſcribe the miraculous Draught of Fiſhes, *Luke* v. 10. which, upon our Lord's Command to make a freſh Experiment, was taken.

PETER and his Companions had been hard at Work all Night, but without any manner of Succeſs; and therefore when Sermon was ended, and our Saviour ordered *Peter* to launch out farther, and to let down his Nets for a Draught, he modeſtly told him of their unſucceſsful Toiling all Night, but, nevertheleſs, in Obedience to him, he was willing: Nor had he cauſe to repent, for, upon letting down the Nets they incloſed ſuch a Multitude of Fiſhes, that their Tackle began to break, ſo that they were forced to call to their Partners in the other Ship, to come to their Aſſiſtance, becauſe the Draught was ſuch, that it loaded both the Veſſels ſo very deep, that they were in ſome Danger of ſinking before they got to Shore.

AMAZED at this marvellous Sight, and dreading the viſible Appearance of ſo great and ſo divine a Power juſt by him, *Peter* threw himſelf down at our Saviour's Feet, deſiring him to *depart from him*, becauſe he was a Perſon no ways worthy of his Preſence. But our Saviour bid him be of good Comfort, and,

from the preſent Incident took Occaſion to inform him, that he had a nobler Work and Employment for him, even the *gaining of Mens Souls to Salvation*, if he would adjoin himſelf to him; and having given the like Invitation to the only three, *Andrew*, *James*, and *John*, they all obeyed his Call, and leaving their Veſſels, Nets, Relations, and Employment, became, ever after, his conſtant and inſeparable Diſciples.

AFTER the Choice of theſe four Diſciples, our Saviour returned with them into the City; and, on the next *Sabbath-day*, went into the chief Synagogue, and there preached to the People, with ſo much Force and Authority, and, in a Manner, ſo widely different from their uſual Teachers, the Scribes, that all were aſtoniſhed at him; and to increaſe their Admiration, one in the Congregation, whoſe Body was poſſeſſed with an unclean Spirit, cried out in an hideous Manner, *Let us alone, what have we to do with thee, thou* Jeſus *of* Nazareth? *Art thou come to deſtroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God:* But *Jeſus*, who wanted not the Teſtimony of ſuch Confeſſors, commanded his Silence, and Departure out of the poor Man's Body, which immediately was done to the great Surprize and Amazement of all the Spectators.

FROM the Synagogue our Lord retired to *Peter*'s Houſe, where his Wife's Mother lay ſick of a Fever; but upon his approaching the Bed-ſide, and taking her by the Hand, he commanded the Fever to depart, and that Moment reſtored her to ſuch perfect Health, that immediately ſhe aroſe, and (as if ſhe had never been ſick) waited on the Company. This, and the other Miracle in the Synagogue (as ſoon as the Sun was ſet, and the *Sabbath* ended) gathered all the City together about *Peter*'s Houſe, bringing *Demoniacks*, and diſeaſed People of all Kinds, and begging the Relief of this heavenly Phyſician,

ſician, who very readily cured them all, by a Touch only, or the Impoſition of his Hand.

THE next Morning he retired very early into a private Place, that, being free from the Noiſe and Importunities of the Multitude, he might have an Opportunity to pray; but even in his Solitude he was found out; and therefore to diſingage himſelf from ſuch a Crowd of Attendants, he told his Diſciples the Purport of his Miſſion was, to preach the Goſpel in other neighbouring Cities; and, accordingly, leaving *Caperanum*, he made a Progreſs into *Galilee*, preaching in their public Synagogues, curing all Kinds of Diſtempers, and diſpoſſeſſing all *Demoniacks* that were brought to him.

WE have ſeveral Inſtances, both in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, of Perſons ſtruck with dreadful Apprehenſions at the Preſence of the Divine Majeſty, or even of ſome Angel, or a Prophet, delivering a Meſſage from him. And therefore *Grotius* ſuppoſes, that *Peter*'s Caſe was much the ſame with that of the Widow of *Sarepta*, when ſhe complained to *Elijah*, *What have I to do with thee, O thou Man of God, art thou come unto me to call my Sins to Remembrance?* 1 Kings xvii. 18. But others moſt juſtly think, that *Peter*'s Words are expreſſive rather of his high Sentiments of our Lord, and the Conſciouſneſs of his own Unworthineſs to be found in ſuch a Perſon's Company, and that therefore they do not a little reſemble that glorious Declaration of the Centurion in the Goſpel, *Lord, I am not worthy, that thou ſhouldeſt come under my Roof, but ſpeak the Word only, and my Servant ſhall be healed*, Matt. viii. 8.

THE Words in our Tranſlation, *From henceforth thou ſhalt catch Men*, in the *Greek* have ſomething very remarkable. For it does not ſay, that *Peter* ſhould catch Men, as People generally do wild Beaſts or Fiſhes, in order to kill them, and eat them; but that he ſhould *take them alive*, as ſuch Fiſh

and

and wild Creatures are taken, that are designed to be put in Stews and Parks; and therefore the Sense of the Words is, — *Thou shalt be a Fisher of Men*, but such a Fisher, as shall preserve them alive; as shall retrieve them, in short, from Error, and Ignorance, and Death: and conduct them to Truth, and Knowledge, and eternal Life.

TOWARDS the Conclusion of the first Chapter of St. *John*'s Gospel, we meet with a Call of some five of our Lord's Disciples, about a Year prior to this; but, by the Account of the other *Evangelists*, it appears that they did not, at this Time, become our Saviour's constant Attendants, because it is presumable that though he took this Opportunity to make himself known to them, yet he had not as yet any immediate Occasion for them, and therefore remitted them to their respective Trades. Only *Philip* is supposed to have retained to him from the very first, because he seems to have called him in a formal Manner as he did not, at that Time, the rest, *John* i. 43. and because we find no farther Interview between him and *Philip* upon this Score, as there was between him and three, at least of the rest, *Luke* v. 10, 11. These three Disciples therefore, *viz. Andrew*, *Peter*, and *John*, were twice called, but the former Calling was rather a Warning to hold themselves in Readiness for it, than an actual engaging them in his Service; but now in *Philip* we meet with no other Call, than what he had at first, and therefore, though the Fathers, and some ancient Writers, have given the Honour to St. *Andrew* of being the first called Disciple; yet that Prerogative is evidently St. *Philip*'s. For, though *Andrew* and *Peter* were the first that came and conversed with our Lord, yet we find them returning to their Trades again, and not ordained to their Discipleship, till after the Time that the *Baptist* was cast into Prison.

THERE are several Opinions, wherein the Excellency of *Christ*'s Preaching, above that of the

Jewish

Jewiſh Doctors, did conſiſt. Some think, that his Teaching was not ſo much in the manner of an *Inſtructor*, as a *Legiſlator*, and one who, in his own Name, had Power to propound the Terms of Life and Death. But though this, in Relation to Chriſt's Divinity, be certainly true; yet it is not ſo agreeable, either to his prophetic Office, or his frequent Declarations, *that the Doctrine, which he taught, was not his own, but his who ſent him; and that he ſpake not of himſelf, but as his Father had commanded him*, John vii. 16. and xii. 49. Others imagine, that the Excellency of *Chriſt*'s Preaching conſiſted in the Miracles, wherewith he confirmed his Doctrine; for ſo the *Evangeliſt* repreſents the Matter: *They all marvelled, ſaying, what is this new Doctrine, for with Authority he commandeth the unclean Spirits, and they obey him?* Mark i. 27. But becauſe another *Evangeliſt* tells us, that it was his Doctrine, without his Miracles that aſtoniſhed the People, *Matt.* vii. 29. others are of Opinion, that this Excellency lay in the graceful and lively Manner of his Delivery, not like the Teachers of the *Jews*, who read their Lectures of the Law ſo coldly, ſo perfunctorily, as never to affect the Hearts of their Hearers; and that, in ſhort, he ſpake as a Prophet, who had a full Commiſſion from God to deliver his Meſſage to them; not as the Scribes, who pretended only to deliver the Traditions of their Forefathers.

THOSE, who are minded to depreciate our Saviour's Miracles, will needs perſuade us, that the *Jews*, having a Notion, that the Diſeaſes, whoſe Symptoms they could not account for, were inflicted by Devils, whom God might employ to chaſtiſe Mankind, did therefore give the Name of *Evil Spirits* to ſeveral Diſtempers, which proceeded merely from natural Cauſes; that, of theſe Diſtempers, ſuch as had any Thing loathſome or nauſeous attending them, they generally called by the Name of *an unclean Spirit*; and that, becauſe Sepulchres, of all other

other Places, were reputed the moſt polluted, therefore, whenever any crazy or melancholly People took it in their Heads to frequent ſuch Places, they were always ſaid to be poſſeſſed with ſuch Spirits.

IT may juſtly be made a Queſtion, whether the Devil, who poſſeſſed this Man, did actually know our Saviour to be the Son of God, as he pretended. There are two *Evangeliſts* who relate this Miracle, and, in the Concluſion of it, both tell us, that our Saviour *ſuffered not the Devils to ſpeak, becauſe they knew him to be Chriſt*, Mark i. 34. Luke iv. 41. but, notwithſtanding this, ſome Interpreters do not ſcruple to affirm the contrary, *viz.* That the Devil had no perfect Perception of our Lord's Divinity, until his Reſurrection from the Dead. The State of Humiliation which he choſe, the Obſcurity which he lived in, and the Perſecutions which he ſuffered, without ever employing his Power to repreſs them; the Care which he took to conceal his moſt renowned Actions, and to refer the Glory of them all to God alone, deceived the Devil, and kept him in Suſpence. For had he known *Jeſus*, ſay they, he would never have put it into the Heart of *Judas* to betray, or of the *Jews* to crucify him, ſince this was the proper Way to accompliſh Man's Redemption. But the Anſwer to this is obvious,——That, though the Devil did know *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſiah*, yet he did not know the Myſtery of Man's Redemption. When he firſt eſſayed our Lord in his Temptations, he ſpeaks indeed in a diffident Manner, *If thou be the Son of God*; but, by his Defeat he ſoon perceived that his Antagoniſt was more than Man. Though therefore he perfectly knew him to be the Son of God, yet ſeeing him inveſted with our Nature, he might, very likely be ſo far infatuated, as to think, that, by deſtroying his Humanity, he might poſſibly defeat God's great Deſign. For how ſublime ſoever we may ſuppoſe his intellective Faculties to be, yet the wonderful Work of Man's Salvation by the

Death

Death of *Chriſt*, the Apoſtle plainly tells us, is, what no finite Underſtanding could comprehend, until *God was pleaſed to make all Men ſee, what is the Fellowſhip of the Myſtery, which, from the Beginning of the World, hath been hid in God, to the Intent that now, unto Principalities, and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known, by the Church, the manifold Wiſdom of God, according to the eternal Purpoſe, which he purpoſed in* Chriſt Jeſus our Lord, *Eph.* iii. 9, *&c.*

FEVERS are common Diſtempers, and very often cured by ordinary Means, ſo that the Nature of this Miracle did not lie in the Cure of an incurable Diſeaſe, but in the Manner of the Cure, which was with a Touch, the Suddenneſs of it, her Fever immediately left her; and the Perfectneſs of it, in that ſhe was able to riſe, and wait on the Company. This is ſaid to be *Peter*'s Wife's Mother; and from hence it may be preſumed, that *Peter*, who was himſelf of *Bethſaida*, had married a Woman of *Capernaum*, and there lived with his Mother-in-Law.

THE curing of Diſeaſes, and the caſting out of Devils, were undoubtedly two diſtinct Things, and conſequently, is an Error in thoſe, who, in their *Annotations* upon the very Texts, where they are mentioned ſeparately, endeavour to perſuade us, that the Devils caſt out were only Diſeaſes.

IN our Lord's Progreſs through *Galilee*, he met with a Man overſpread with a foul Leproſy, whom, upon his humble Petition, with one Touch he immediately healed, but at the ſame Time gave him ſtrict Charge not to diſcover it to any one, until he had preſented himſelf before the Prieſt, and offered the Sacrifice that was appointed for a Teſtimony of his Cure: But the poor Man, out of the Abundance of his Joy, could not refrain from publiſhing it abroad, wherever he came, which ſtill increaſed our Saviour's Fame, ſo that he avoided returning openly into the City of *Capernaum*, leſt the Multi-

tude of his Followers ſhould give him ſome Umbrage to the State, and therefore, having finiſhed his Progreſs through *Galilee* (which laſted for almoſt three Months) he retired into a deſart Place, and there employed ſome Part of his Time in Prayer.

UPON leaving his Retirement, he went privately into *Capernaum*, but it was not long before he was diſcovered; and then there were ſuch vaſt Crowds of People gathered together to hear his Sermons, and to bring them that were diſeaſed, that the Houſe where he was, and all the Court-yard about it, were not ſufficient to contain them. In the Houſe were many great Perſons; *Phariſees*, and Doctors of the Law, from *Jeruſalem* and *Judea*, as well as *Galilee*; who, led thither by their Curioſity, ſat hearing his Diſcourſes, and obſerving his Miracles, when four Men came bearing a Paralytick on his Bed; but finding it impoſſible to paſs through the Throng, they ventured to uncover the Houſe, and to let down the ſick Man, Bed and all, into the very Room where he was ſitting.

OUR bleſſed Saviour, being not a little pleaſed with ſuch an Inſtance of their Faith and Reliance on his Mercy, was reſolved to cure the Man; and accordingly, he gave him an Abſolution from his Sins: This provoked the Indignation of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, as deeming him guilty of Blaſphemy, becauſe none, as they imagined, could forgive Sins but God alone. But he, knowing their ſecret Thoughts, firſt reproved their Cenſoriouſneſs; and then, by curing the Patient before them, plainly demonſtrated what Authority he had to forgive Sins. For though the Power of healing, be much inferior to that of forgiving Sins, yet, becauſe it is not eaſy to impoſe a Cure upon the World, where Mens Senſes are Witneſſes, as Remiſſion of Sins, which is a ſecret and inviſible Operation; therefore all the People, who were convinced, by their Eyes, of the Efficacy of *Chriſt*'s laſt Words, *Riſe and Walk*,

were

were ſatisfied of the Truth of the former, *Thy Sins are forgiven thee*, and accordingly they glorified the Almighty, who had manifeſted ſuch Power on Earth, and being filled with reverential Fear, declared that *they had ſeen ſtrange and wonderful Things that Day*.

THE Leproſy was a Diſtemper very common among the *Jews*. It proceeding from a general Corruption of the Blood and Juices, rendered the Perſon, tainted with it, extreamly loathſome and deformed; and, in hot Countries eſpecially, was, of all Diſtempers, the moſt ſpreading in the Body, and the moſt contagious to others. But then, with regard to the Notions of the *Jews*, and their Law concerning it, it was ſtill more deteſtable. It ſeparated the Perſon, infected with it, from all civil and religious Communion; it diſtinguiſhed him by all the outward Significations of Sorrow and Shame; it was generally looked upon as a Plague inflicted by God, for ſome enormous Crime; it was thought ſo far above the Power of Art, that the very Attempt to cure it by Medicine was eſteemed an impious Preſumption. In ſhort, it was dreaded as the higheſt of all legal Pollutions; and required a great Variety of Luſtrations, before the Patient could be reſtored to the Privilege of a *Jew*, Levit. xiii.

BUT how came our Saviour to run the Hazard of making himſelf unclean, *Levit.* v. 3. by touching one, that was manifeſtly ſo? Now, whatever the Law concerning the Leper's Uncleanneſs might be, it ſeems, as if the Prieſt, that officiated about him, was not affected by it, becauſe we find him directed to make ſo near an Examination and Inſpection into his Diſtemper, *Levit.* xiii. 14, *&c. Aaron*, we may obſerve, though he officiated about his Siſter *Miriam* in her Leproſy, is not ſaid to have contracted any Pollution by it; and therefore well might a much greater High-prieſt than *Aaron*, in Virtue of his Office, claim the ſame Immunity. But then, in

Virtue of his Divinity, it was impoſſible for him to incur any legal Uncleanneſs: As therefore the Effect wrought upon this Leper, was a plain Demonſtration, that the *Finger of God was in it*, and he conſequently approved of the Action, ſo the *Jews* make it a received Rule, that a *Prophet might vary from, and even change the Ritual Law:* And, from hence we may infer, that as *Elijah* and *Eliſha* both might touch the dead Children whom they raiſed to Life again, without any Imputation of Uncleanneſs, 1 *Kings* xvii. 19. and 2 *Kings* iv. 34. ſo might our Saviour touch this Leper; though the Opinion of ſome is, that he did not properly touch him, as a Leper, becauſe the Moment that he ſtretched out his Hands, the Leproſy was cured; but if it were not, the Obſervation of *Theophylact* ſtill ſtands good, *viz. That our Lord might touch the Leper, in order to ſhew, that it was not neceſſary to obſerve thoſe leſſer Matters of the Law; that touching an unclean Perſon did not defile one that was pure himſelf; and that the only Thing, indeed, that did defile, was the Leproſy of the Soul.*

IF it be aſked, Why our Saviour ſhould ſo often command the concealing his Miracles? We may aſſign for Reaſons, not only his Modeſty and great Humility, that there might be no Appearance of Oſtentation in him, and that the *Jews* might have no Pretence to accuſe him *of ſeeking his own Glory*, Matt. xii. 16. but becauſe, at this Time, it was not proper to irritate the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* (who had already made him quit *Judea*) too much. He knew, that in ſuch a determinate Space they would bring about what God in his Counſel had decreed: In the mean Time, *he was to work the Work of him that ſent him, while it was Day*, John ix. 4. and to propagate his Goſpel, as much as poſſibly he could, both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; which could not have been conveniently done, if the Greatneſs of his Miracles had once provoked the Malice and

Envy

Envy of his Enemies, to make their utmoſt Oppoſition againſt him. He knew likewiſe the mad and capricious Humour of the Multitude, and had Reaſon to apprehend *that they might come and take him away by Force, and make him a King*, John vi. 15. if all his Miracles had been blazed abroad, before he had ſufficiently inſtructed them in the ſpiritual Nature of his Kingdom. As therefore he was far from being a Friend to Popularity, or Sedition, he deſired that ſeveral of his Miracles might be ſuppreſſed; leſt any bad Conſequences ſhould attend the Publication of them, until his own Reſurrection from the Dead ſhould be an undeniable Proof and Confirmation of all the reſt. And this I take to be the Reaſon of his referring the *Phariſees*, when they came to demand a Sign of him, to that of the Prophet *Jonah*, Matt. xii. 39. whereby he implied, that he would uſe no more Means for their Conviction, until, by the Miracle of his Reſurrection, his divine Power, and the Completion of the antient Types and Prophecies ſhould be ſo evidently manifeſted as to leave them without all Excuſe.

THE Prieſthood, at this Time, was much degenerated from its primitive Inſtitution, and many human Rites and Ordinances were added to God's Law, concerning the Prieſt's Examination of the Leper, who pretended to be clean; and yet our Lord ſent this Leper to ſubmit to all theſe new-invented Ceremonies, as knowing, that though they did indeed corrupt, yet they did not extinguiſh the divine Inſtitution. The divine Inſtitution was no more than this, That when a Leper was cured, he was to appear at the City Gate, and the Prieſts were to examine whether he was truly healed, or no; if he was, the Prieſt received him into the City, and by Degrees into the Temple, whither he ſhould bring two clean Birds of any Kind, (the marginal Note ſays Sparrows) and having made a Bunch of Cedar and Hyſſop, mixed together, ſhould tie them with

with a ſcarlet Ribbon made of Wool; that to this Bunch of Cedar and Hyſſop one of theſe Birds ſhould be faſtened alive, and the other killed by the Leper that was cured, and its Blood received in a Veſſel, filled with Water; that when this was done, the Prieſt ſhould take the Bunch with the live Bird, and having dipped both in the Water, tinged with the Blood of the other Bird, ſhould ſeven Times ſprinkle the Leper with it; and that, after this, the live Bird ſhould be let looſe to fly where it would, and the Perſon thus healed and purified, ſhould again be admitted to the Society of the Healthy, and a Communion in religious Offices, *Levit.* xiv. 1, *&c.*

VARIOUS are the Senſes to which the Words, *a Teſtament to them* are taken; for they may ſignify that the Gift or Oblation, which the Leper was to carry, would be a Means to evince the Perfection of his Cure, when the Prieſts had examined and admitted it as ſuch; that this would likewiſe be an Evidence to the People, who ſtood by at that Time, and ſaw him cured, when they ſhould hear that the Prieſt had pronounced him clean; a Proof to the Prieſts, that himſelf was an Obſerver of the Law, by requiring his Patient to comply with the Ceremonies of it; and a full Demonſtration that he was a Prophet come from God, ſince they themſelves owned that a Leproſy could only be cured by *the Finger of God.*

THE Word *paralytick*, in the *Greek*, ſignifies to *reſolve* or *relax*, and ſeems to imply that this Diſtemper is a Relaxation of the Nerves, though it ſometimes proceeds from other Cauſes. It is always attended with great Weakneſſes and Obſtructions of the Blood and Juices, which deprive the Limbs of their Motion, and ſometimes occaſion great Pain. This Diſtemper is reckoned above the Power of all Medicines to remove; and yet our Savi-

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our cured it ſeveral Times, merely by a Word ſpeaking.

BUT how could they poſſibly uncover the Houſe, to let down the Paralytick into the Room where *Chriſt* was, when they could not ſo much as get to it, much leſs get upon it, by Reaſon of the Throng that was before the Door? Now, to have a right Notion of this Matter, we muſt obſerve, that the Houſes in *Judea* were, for the moſt part (even as they are to this Day) low built and flat roofed, and ſurrounded with a Battlement about Breaſt high, according to God's own Injunction, *Deut.* xxii. 8. ſo that to go up to the Top of their Houſes, the *Jews* had two Ways; one by a Pair of Stairs within the Houſe, leading up to a Trap-Door, which lay even with the Roof; and the other on the Outſide of the Houſe by a Ladder, or Pair of Stairs rather, either fixed or moveable, by which they could aſcend to the Roof, when they pleaſed, without ever going into the Houſe itſelf. Since this then was the general Faſhion of *Jewiſh* Houſes, we need not doubt, but that at *Capernaum* was of the ſame Figure and Make; and therefore the Bearers of the Paralytick, finding that they could not come at the Door, by Reaſon of the Crowd, bethought themſelves of another Expedient. They went round a private Way, and coming to the Stairs, which ſtood on the Outſide of the Houſe, up theſe they carry him, and preſently gain the Top. But finding the Trap-Door (or Way of the Roof, as the *Jews* call it) ſhut againſt them, they immediately go to Work, and forcing it open (which St. *Luke* calls *uncovering* or *breaking up the Roof*, Chap. ii. 4. becauſe the Door, which lay even with the Roof, when let down and ſhut, was reputed a Part of it) they conveyed him down that Way, which St. *Luke* calls letting him down through the Tiling, *i. e.* through the Roof, which (except where the Door was) was all paved with large Tiles;

and

and by this Means they found it no difficult Matter *to place him in the midſt before* Jeſus.

SOME have ſuppoſed, that becauſe the Hiſtory makes no Mention of any Faith, but that of the Friends and Bearers of this impotent Man, that therefore the Patient himſelf had no Part in that virtuous Diſpoſition, which inclined our Saviour to compaſſionate him; and thence they infer, how far a Man may be benefited by the Faith and Interceſſion of others in his Behalf. But it is a Miſtake to think that the Words, *their Faith*, exclude that of the ſick Perſon: For had he not been perſuaded that *Chriſt* was able to cure him, he would never have ſuffered himſelf to be preſented to him, in a Method ſo troubleſome to his weak Condition. We read, indeed, of no Petition that he made to our Lord, but the Violence of his Diſtemper might poſſibly have deprived him of the Uſe of Speech; or if it had not, the very Spectacle of a Body ſo debilitated, the Manner of the Action, and the Fatigue which he muſt have undergone in it, all ſpoke for him, and carried a more moving Eloquence, than it was poſſible for any Tongue to utter.

THE *Jews* were of this Perſuaſion, That every Diſeaſe of the Body (thoſe eſpecially which were of a grievous Nature) were ſent upon Men for the Puniſhment of their Sins; and though they might carry this Maxim too far, *John* ix. 3. yet ſure it is, that the Scriptures repreſent moſt of the Calamities of Life, as the natural Effect of Mens Iniquities. And therefore ſome have obſerved, that as the Word *Sins*, is frequently put for the Puniſhment of Sins, our Saviour's forgiving the Man's Sins, was no more than a Declaration of his Intention to cure his Diſtemper: Whereas it is plain, that our Saviour ſpeaks of them, as two diſtinct Things, when he puts the Queſtion to the Company, *Whether it is eaſier to ſay, Thy Sins be forgiven thee, or to ſay, Take up thy Bed and walk*, Matt. ix. 4.

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THE Word Blaſphemy, in heathen Writers, ſignifies no more than Slander or Calumny or opprobrious Language of any Kind, ſuch as tends to impair a Man's good Name; but, in the ſacred Stile, it means unworthy and injurious Talk concerning God's Nature or Attributes, as when we aſcribe to him ſuch Qualities as belong not to him, or rob him of thoſe that do: aſcribing to him, the Infirmities of Man, or to Man the Perfections of God. This is the Nature of the Sin, and the Puniſhment of it, under the Law, was ſtoning without the Gates of the City, *Levit.* xxiv. 15, 16.

WHILE our Lord continued at *Capernaum*, he went out one Day (as frequently he did) to the Lake-ſide, and finding one *Matthew*, otherwiſe named *Levi*, the Son of *Alpheus*, a rich *Publican*, ſitting in his Office, he called him to be one of his Diſciples, who immediately forſook his gainful Employment, and afterwards became both an Apoſtle and Evangeliſt. Within a few Days after his Converſion, *Matthew* invited our Saviour and his Diſciples, and, among others, ſome of the Profeſſion which he had forſook, to the Feaſt. The *Scribes* and *Phariſees* (who aacounted all in a manner Sinners, beſides themſelves, but more eſpecially theſe *Publicans*) began to expoſtulate with theſe Diſciples, how it came to paſs that their Maſter, who ſet themſelves up for a Preacher of Righteouſneſs, and a Reformer of others, came to be ſo intimate with theſe lewd and loſt Wretches, as to ſit and eat with them at the ſame Table: But when our Saviour undertook the Argument, he gave ſo fair an Account of the Reaſons for his converſing with theſe People, as made the very Objection become his Apology. But all this would not content the *Phariſees*, and therefore joining with ſome of *John*'s Diſciples, that were then preſent, they came and demanded of him, why it was that his Diſciples obſerved no Faſts, when they, and *John*'s Diſciples were known to keep

many? To which he replied, *That it was not the proper Season for the Friends of the Bridegroom to fast and afflict themselves while they had the Bridegroom's Company, but when they were deprived of it; and that it would be as imprudent and prepostrous a Thing, to impose rigorous Austerities upon his Disciples (who were but Novices in Religion, and inured to another Way of Life)* as it would be to sew a Piece of new Cloth upon a rotten Garment, which, upon any Stress, would make the Rent worse, or to put new Wine into old leathern Bottles; which, upon the least Fermentation, would both burst the Bottles, and destroy the Liquor; *but see the Tyranny of Custom, and how difficult it is to change an inveterate Habit; in that* none having drank the old Wine desireth the new, for he saith the old is better.

GROTIUS, and those that follow him, are of Opinion, that the *Levi* mentioned *Luke* v. 27. is not the same with *Matthew*, in *Matt.* ix. 9. because *Matthew* never calls himself *Levi*, nor does *Mark* or *Luke* ever call *Levi*, *Matthew*. But the Answer to this has long since been given by St. *Jerom*, on *Matt.* ix. 9. *viz.* that the other two *Evangelists* (as their Charity and good Nature became them) endeavoured to cover the Infamy of their Brother's former Way of Life, and therefore never call him the *Publican*, lest they should seem to reproach him with the Remembrance of his former Conversation, but speak of him under his other Name; though he, out of his great Humility, in the *Gospel* written by himself, does not only take the more commonly known Name of *Matthew*, but adds that odious Title likewise of *Matthew the Publican*. Since then the Custom of having more Names than one, is known to have prevailed among the *Jews*; and, as St. *Mark* calls him *Levi* the Son of *Alpheus*, so *Matthew*, in all Church History, is said to be the Son of one of the same Name; and the History of the Person, *Levi* in *Mark* and *Luke*, agrees so exactly with what is said of him, who in the other Evan-

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geliſt is called *Matthew*, that there is not one circumſtantial Difference to be perceived, we cannot but conclude, that this *Matthew* and *Levi* were one and the ſame Perſon.

THE old Enemies of our Religion, *Julian* and *Porphyry*, accuſed *Matthew* of Folly and Inconſiderateneſs, in following a Man whom he knew nothing of. But St. *Jerom*'s Reply is, That he could not want a ſufficient Knowledge both of our Saviour's Doctrine and Miracle before his Call. The *Publicans* we find were great Frequenters of the Synagogues and other Places where our Saviour taught; and of all others expreſſed the greateſt Eagerneſs to be inſtructed by him; and therefore, if *Matthew* was of the ſame Diſpoſition, he could not want Opportunities of being acquainted with our Saviour's Preaching; and of the wonderful Works which he did every where; but more eſpecially of thoſe at *Capernaum*, it was impoſſible for him to be ignorant. It is very probable, therefore that *Matthew*, upon ſuch Conviction, was inclinable to become one of our Saviour's Diſciples, even before he called him. But if he was not, the Luſtre and Majeſty of the Divinity, hid under the Manhood, but ſhining conſpicuouſly in the Face of *Jeſus Chriſt*, was enough to attract every one that he caſt his Eyes upon; at leaſt that powerful Impulſe, which he, to whom all Hearts are open, knew how to inject into *Matthew*'s Breaſt, could not fail to do it; and from this ſupernatural Movement, doubtleſs it chiefly was, that ſo readily, and without Heſitation, he left all and followed *Chriſt*.

NOR was it only among the *Jews*, but among the *Heathens* likewiſe, that the Name of a *Publican* was infamous. For, according to their Writers, they were accounted no better than Thieves and Cheats; free Violence and unpuniſhed Rapine, and ſhameleſs Covetouſneſs were their public Profeſſion. And it is ſaid of *Theocritus*, that being aſked, *Which was*

the cruelest among the Beasts? his Reply was, *That of those in the Mountains, the Bear and the Lion, but of those in the City, the* Publicans *and* Sycophants.

THE Arguments which our Saviour uses to the *Pharisees* for his keeping Company with *Publicans* and *Sinners*, are these three: First, *They that are whole, need not a Physician, but they that are sick*, Matt. ix. 12. by which he intimates to them, that in conversing with such sort of Persons, he was about the Discharge of his proper Business; and that, as a Physician's Profession did sometimes call him among Patients that had the most virulent Distempers; so he, whose Office it was to heal Souls, ought not to refuse his Assistance to those, whose Circumstances most of all wanted his Help and Advice. Secondly, God's saying, in the Prophet *Hosea*, vi. 6. *that he should have Mercy*, meaning thereby all the kind Offices, whereby we promote our Neighbour's Advantage, *rather than Sacrifice*, i. e. the Rites and Ordinances of the ceremonial Law; whereby he taught them, that though these latter might, in their due Place and Season, be acceptable to God, yet Charity to the Souls of Men (which was the highest Act of Mercy, and that wherein he was then employed himself) was much more esteemed by him. Thirdly, That *he came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance*, or that the great Design of his Appearance in the World was, to change the corrupt Manners and Dispositions of Men; a Change, which the Righteous standing less in need of, should no more grudge the Opportunities of it to Sinners, than the healthful ought to think themselves disparaged, when the Physician forbears his Visits to them, which he makes to the Sick. Some Commentators however have observed, in this last Argument, a severe Irony, and thus they expound it, *I am not come to cure those that think themselves well, nor to save those that account themselves righteous, as you* Pharisees *seem to do; but I am come to cure those who find themselves*

ſelves ſick, are ſenſible of the Burthen of their manifold Iniquities, as theſe Publicans *ſeem to be.*

BESIDES the public Faſts appointed by the Church, the *Phariſees* in general did faſt two Days every Week, and thoſe of more Strictneſs than ordinary, four. The Diſciples of *John* too, who was a Man of ſuch Abſtinence, that our Saviour ſays of him, he *came* (comparatively) *neither eating nor drinking*, Matt. xi. 18. did, no doubt, in a great Meaſure, follow the Example of their Maſter; and now, that he was confined in Priſon, might, very probably, double their Faſts, and their Prayers to God for his Deliverance. And if they and the *Phariſees* were able to do this, why ſhould the Diſciples of *Chriſt* be deemed inſufficient? Now to this it may be anſwered, that among the *Jews*, there were not only the Sects of *Eſſenes* and *Phariſees*, who led an auſtere Life, but alſo Schools of the Prophets, many of whom were *Nazarites*, and conſecrated to the Service of God; and that, beſides theſe, the *Jews* had likewiſe academical and private Schools, from whence might come Diſciples to *John*, and the *Phariſees*, already trained up to Faſting and Pennance, and other ſevere Duties of Religion. But now it is certain, that the Diſciples of our Lord were choſen from their Fiſhing-trade, and ſo came to him wholly unacquainted with, and unfitted for theſe Auſterities, which, to impoſe upon them now, was not neceſſary: Becauſe his Continuance among them was not to be long, and after his Departure they would have Occaſion more than enough, to exerciſe theſe, and many more painful Duties in the Propagation of the Goſpel, and the Perſecutions which would attend it.

THE *Baptiſt*, in his Diſcourſe to his Diſciples, had compared our Saviour to a Bridegroom, and himſelf to his Friend or chief Gueſt, *John* iii. 29. and therefore, as our Saviour deſignedly makes uſe of the ſame Alluſion, his Argument runs thus, *I am the Bridegroom, and my Church is my Bride; as long*

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as I am here, laſts the Marriage-Feaſt, and my Diſciples are the Children or Friends of the Bridegroom, and ſo are not to mourn, but to rejoice with me, while this Time laſts: But at my Death and Departure, this Bridegroom ſhall be taken from them, and then will it be time for them to faſt and mourn.

THE Bottles which were in the Eaſt, and at this Time are very common in *France*, were not made of Glaſs, as ours are, but were certain Bags made of Goat-ſkins, having the Hair on the Inſide, and being well pitched and ſewed together. They are very good Veſſels to preſerve Wine, Oil, or any other Liquor in; and in this Reſpect, more eſpecially, very convenient to carry from Place to Place, becauſe, fall they never ſo often, they will not break, unleſs they be very old or decayed. In which Senſe our Saviour compares his Diſciples, before the Deſcent of the Holy Spirit upon them, to *old Bottles*, becauſe they were not capable either of comprehending orpractiſing all that Perfection which he came into the World to teach Mankind.

CHAP. II.

From the Beginning of the Second Paſſover, *to our* LORD's Transfiguration. *In all one Year and about four Months.*

OUR Bleſſed Saviour was now in the ſecond Year of his publick Miniſtry, when the near Approach of the *Paſſover* (which was the ſecond after his Baptiſm) called him to *Jeruſalem*. On the *South-eaſt* Side of the City, there was a famous Pool, and an Hoſpital called *Betheſda*, which conſiſted of five Porticoes, in which lay a great Multitude of poor impotent People, with Diſtempers of all Kinds, waiting for the moving of the Water; for, at certain Times, an Angel came from Heaven, and putting the Pool in a Fermentation, conveyed ſuch a medicinal Virtue into it, that the firſt Perſon who entered it, after ſuch Commotion, was cured of whatſoever Diſtemper he had. On the Sabbath-Day our Saviour came to this Place; and ſeeing a poor Paralytick, who had been in that Condition for the Space of of eight and thirty Years, and lain there a long while in Expectance of a Cure, but all in vain; becauſe, whenever the Water was moved, ſome one or other always ſtepped in before and prevented him; he immediately healed him with a Word ſpeaking; and, at the ſame Time, ordered him to take up his Bed and walk home: But, while he was doing this, the *Jews* exclaimed againſt him for bearing a Burthen

then on the Sabbath-Day, which was directly contrary to their Law. The Man excuſed himſelf, by declaring that the Perſon who had miraculouſly cured him, commanded him ſo to do, which he thought a ſufficient Warrant: But when they underſtood that it was *Jeſus*, they brought him before the *Sanhedrim*, with a Deſign to take away his Life, as an open Profaner of the Sabbath. Here, in Defence of himſelf, he alledged, *That ſince God (from whoſe Reſt they took the Obſervation of the Sabbath) did, on that Day, and all others, exerciſe the Works of Providence, Preſervation, and Mercy, there could be no Reaſon, why he, who was his Son, and inveſted with full Authority from him* (as he proves immediately in a Set Speech before the Council) *might not employ himſelf on the Sabbath, as well as any other Day, in Actions of the like Nature:* This provoked the *Jews* ſtill more and more againſt him, for they looked upon him now not only as a Sabbath-breaker, but a Blaſphemer likewiſe, who, by making himſelf the Son of God, had claimed a Co-equality with him.

BEFORE we proceed, let us ſee what the Learned have ſaid on ſome of the foregoing Paſſages.

FROM the Time that our Lord firſt began his Miniſtry, to the Concluſion of it, there had been four Paſſovers held at *Jeruſalem*; all, except the laſt, are not mentioned by the three firſt *Evangeliſts*, but St. *John* has been mindful to ſet every one down; the firſt, Chap. ii. 13. the ſecond, Chap. v. 1. the third, Chap iv. 4. and the fourth, Chap. xiii. 1.

THE Word tranſlated *Pool*, ſignifies any Pool or Head of Water, that is deep enough for a Man to ſwim in: But as, in hot Countries more eſpecially, the Uſe of conſtant bathing was highly neceſſary, for which Purpoſe it was uſual, in every great City, to have publick Baths erected, ſome have imagined that this Pool was a large Baſon of Water of this Kind; and that the Porticoes about it were Places made for the Conveniency of dreſſing or undreſſing,

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in the Shade, for thoſe that were minded to bathe. However this be, it is certain, that in antient Times there were two Pools within the Compaſs of the Mount on which the Temple ſtood, the one called the *Upper-Pool*, 2 Kings xviii. 17. and the other *The Pool of* Siloam, *by the King's Garden*, Nehem. iii. 15. That St. *Jerom* (who himſelf had been at *Jeruſalem*) makes mention of two Reſervoirs, one filled with the Rains that fall in Winter, and the other with Water of a deep red Colour, as if ſtill contained a Tinge of the Victims that formerly were waſhed in it; and that Mr. *Maundrel*, in his Travels, Page 107. tells us, that when he was there, he ſaw ſtill remaining, what was reputed the Pool of *Betheſda*, whereof he gives us the particular Dimenſions.

SOME will have the Word *Betheſda* to ſignify a *Drain* or *Sink-houſe*, becauſe the Water which came from the Temple, and the Place where the Victims were waſhed, by ſubterraneous Paſſages ran into it; but moſt Interpreters expound it an *Houſe of Mercy*, ſo called, ſay ſome, becauſe the erecting of Baths was an Act of great Kindneſs to the common People, whoſe Indiſpoſitions, in hot Countries, required frequent bathing, though the Generality rather think, that it more properly had that Name, from God's great Goodneſs ſhewn to his People, by giving this healing Virtue to theſe Waters.

THE *Greek* Word which we render *Infirmity* or *Weakneſs*, is, indeed, a general Name for almoſt all Diſtempers; but here it is ſo limitted in its Signification, by the Circumſtances occurring in the Man's Hiſtory, that it can properly denote no other Diſeaſe than what we call a confirmed Palſey: For, beſides that, the Symptoms of no other Diſtemper do ſo exactly agree with the Deſcription of this Infirmity, both in Point of its long Continuance, and extream Weakneſs; the very Word Weakneſs, in its moſt obvious Senſe, anſwers exactly to ſuch a Relaxation of the nervous Syſtem, as the Palſey is known to be

and (what is no mean Circumſtance) our Saviour makes uſe of the ſame Form and Method of Cure to this very Man, that he applies to another Paralytick, *Riſe, take up thy Bed and walk*, Matt. ix. 6.

IF it be aſked, how it came to paſs that of the Multitude of infirm People, who lay at this Pool, our Saviour ſhould think fit to cure but one? The Anſwer is obvious, becauſe he was an Object moſt to be compaſſionated of any in the Place, not only becauſe he was too feeble to ſtep into the Water himſelf, and too poor to have any to aſſiſt him; but, more eſpecially, becauſe he had been now a long while in this Condition, and yet ſtill depended upon the good Providence of God for an Opportunity to be cured at one Time or other. To cure at once whole Multitudes, indeed, ſounds more popular, and carries the Face of more extenſive Goodneſs; but beſides that, our Saviour might, in this Caſe, very probably, conform to the Rule of Cure eſtabliſhed providentially at *Bethesda*, which was to heal but one Perſon at one Time; his great Deſign, in every Action of this Kind, was to prove his Character and Commiſſion from God; to which End one ſingle and inconteſtible Miracle was as ſufficient an Evidence as a Thouſand. The ſhort is, ſince our Lord was at Liberty to do what he would with his own, or to beſtow his Favours where he pleaſed, his Goodneſs was conſpicuous, in chuſing the moſt helpleſs Object, and his Wiſdom no leſs manifeſt, in leaving the reſt to the ſtanding Miracle of the Pool.

IT is very obſervable, that whenever our Lord did any Miracle, he generally adjoined ſome Circumſtance or other to denote the Truth and Reality of it. Thus, after his Multiplication of the Loaves and Fiſhes, he ordered his Diſciples to gather up the Fragments, which amounted to twelve Baſkets full. Upon his changing the Water into Wine, at *Cana*, he commanded the Servants to carry it to the Ruler

of

of the Feaſt, for him to taſte it. When he had healed the Leper near *Capernaum*, he ſent him to preſent his Oblation, in Teſtimony of his Cure; and here, for the ſame Reaſon, *viz.* the Demonſtration of the Compleatneſs of his Cure, he bids the Paralytick *take up his Bed and go home.* But why did he this on the Sabbath-Day? Even to make his Divine Power and Miſſion more univerſally known, eſpecially in *Jeruſalem*, the Capital of the Nation, and Center of the *Jewiſh* Church, by firſt working this Miracle on the Sabbath-Day, when there were more People at Liberty to view and conſider it; and then ſending his Patient along the Streets, in a very uncommon Manner, and to make the People more inquiſitive, with his Bed upon his Back.

THE Prohibition relating to the Obſervation of the Sabbath, runs thus: *Thus ſaith the Lord, Take heed to yourſelves, and bear no Burthen on the Sabbath-Day, nor bring it in by the Gates of* Jeruſalem, *neither carry forth a Burthen out of your Houſes on the Sabbath-Day, neither do ye any Work, but hallow ye the Sabbath-Day, as I commanded your Fathers*, Jer. xvii. 21, 22. and, according to the *Jewiſh* Canons, thoſe who did this, were puniſhable either by Death or Scourging. It muſt be acknowledged therefore, that our Saviour's Injunction to the impotent Man was contrary to the Letter of the Law; but then it may be juſtly ſaid that it was not contrary to the Senſe and Intention of it. The Law only prohibited civil Labour, and reſtrained Men from carrying ſuch Burthens as they were wont to do in the Way of their Trade; but it did not forbid the doing of any Thing that might be a Teſtimony of God's Mercy or Goodneſs to Mankind. As therefore the Sabbath was made for the Honour of God, and this Action was a publick Monument of his Mercy and Power, the Man, properly ſpeaking, did not break the Sabbath; neither did our Lord deſerve any Cenſure from the *Jews*, eſpecially conſidering that as he

was a Prophet, even by their own Rules, he had Power to require what was contrary to the ceremonial Reſt of the Sabbath.

FROM the *Jews* accuſing our Saviour of Blaſphemy, it ſeems to follow, that though the *Jews* had very high Conceptions of the *Meſſiah*, and were confident, that when he came he would be a mighty Prince, and ſubdue all other Nations under his Feet; yet they never once imagined that he would be God, or in the ſtrict and ſublime Senſe of the Word, the Son of God, though, in the very Prophecies, which (as they themſelves acknowledge) relate to the *Meſſiah*, he is called *Immanuel*, Iſa. vii. 14. and elſewhere *the Mighty God*, *the Everlaſting Father*, *the Prince of Peace*, Iſa. ix. 6.

BUT to reſume our Hiſtory. What the Reſult of our Saviour's Defence before the *Sanhedrim* was, we cannot tell, becauſe none of the *Evangeliſts* have acquainted us: But the Sequel of the Hiſtory informs us, that it no Ways abated the Malice of the *Phariſees*; becauſe, on the very next Sabbath-Day, upon his Diſciples pulling ſome Ears of Corn, (as they paſſed through the Fields) rubbing them in their Hands, and ſo eating them, when they were hungry, they began again to clamour againſt this Violation of the Sabbath; until our Saviour, in Vindication of his Diſciples, both from the Example of *David* and his Attendants, (who eat the Shew-bread, which it was unlawful for the Laity to eat) when they were hungry, and from the Example of their own Prieſts, who performed the Work of the Temple on the Sabbath-day, endeavoured to convince them, that Works of Neceſſity were ſometimes permitted, even to the Breach of a ritual Command; that Acts of Mercy were the beſt and moſt acceptable Method of ſerving God upon any Day whatever; that it was inverting the Order of Things, to ſuppoſe, that Man was made for the Sabbath, and not the Sabbath for the Benefit of Man: But if even it were not ſo, that

he, as the Son of God, and conſequently Lord of the Sabbath, had a Power to diſpenſe with the ceremonial Laws concerning it.

NOT long after this, our Saviour left *Jeruſalem*, and returned into *Galilee*, where, on another Sabbath-Day, while he was preaching, there ſtood before him a Man, whoſe Right-Hand was ſhrunk and withered; and when the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* inſidiouſly watched him, whether he would cure, or not, our Lord bid him ſtand up in the Midſt of the Aſſembly, as an Object of publick Commiſeration; and turning to theſe ſuperſtitious Obſervers of the Sabbath, put the Queſtion to them, Whether they *thought it lawful on the Sabbath-Day, to do good or ill, actually to ſave Life, or negligently to deſtroy it?* And then, from their own Practice, in running to the Relief of any dumb Creature, on the Sabbath-Day, he fairly inferred, that whatever their hypocritical Pretences might be, they themſelves eſteemed it lawful to do Good on that Day; and ſo looking about him with ſome Marks of Indignation for their ſtrange Perverſeneſs, he commanded the poor Man to ſtretch out his lame Hand, and that very Moment it became as ſound as the other.

THE *Phariſees*, however, though ſilenced by his Arguments, and ſurprized at his Miracles, would not ſurceaſe their Malice, but joined in Conſultation with the *Herodians* (though a Sect quite oppoſite to them in Principles) how they might take away his Life; which, when our Saviour underſtood, he withdrew, with his Diſciples, toward the Sea-ſide; But which Way ſoever he went, his Name was now grown ſo famous, that vaſt Multitudes, not only out of *Galilee*, but from *Jeruſalem*, from the Provinces of *Judea*, and *Idumea*, and all the Country about *Jordan*, as far as the *Mediterranean-Sea*, to the Coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, hearing the Report of his miraculous Power to cure all Diſeaſes with a Word of his Mouth, the Touch of his Hand, or barely

barely the handling of his Garment, came with their Sick and Poſſeſſed for Help, and as faſt as they came, he cured them. Nay, to ſuch a Degree was his Fame increaſed, that the very Devils and unclean Spirits publickly confeſſed, that he was the Son of God, till, upon all Occaſions, they were reſtrained and compelled to Silence.

THE following Remarks may ſerve to explain what Difficulties may occur in the preceding Relation.

WHAT our Lord's Diſciples did, in pulling the Ears of Corn, could not be accounted any unjuſt Invaſion of another's Property, becauſe the Law had indulged them thus far; *When thou goeſt into thy Neighbour's Standing-corn, thou mayeſt pluck the Ears with thy Hand: but thou ſhalt not move a Sickle to thy Neighbour's Standing-corn*, Deut. xxiii. 25. It was not then for plucking the Ears of Corn, much leſs (as ſome ſay) for breaking their Faſts before they had celebrated the publick Offices (which was contrary to the Cuſtom of the *Jews*, Acts ii. 15.) that the *Phariſees* took Exceptions to the Diſciples; but for plucking them on the Sabbath-Day, whereof they thought this Action (which at other Times was lawful enough) was a Violation, and accordingly our Saviour's whole Vindication of them turns upon this Suppoſition.

THERE is ſomething very cogent in our Saviour's Argument, taken from *David*'s Practice, becauſe, according to the Conceſſion of the *Jews* themſelves, his Example contains two Things, tending to excuſe the Violation of the Sabbath. 1. That they ſuppoſe that *David* and his Men fled on the Sabbath-Day, and yet were not guilty of breaking the Reſt of the Sabbath; for *our Maſters think it lawful*, ſay they, *in him, whom the Gentiles, or Thieves purſue, to profane the Sabbath, by the Preſervation of his Life, even as* David, *when* Saul *purſued to kill him, fled and eſcaped.* 2. That their Canons allowed the

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Laity to eat of the Shew-bread for the Preſervation of Life; for *it is a ſmall Thing*, ſay they, *to hold that it is lawful for us to eat of the Bread removed from the Table; it would be lawful for us, in the Extremity of Hunger, even to eat of the Bread, now ſanctified upon the Table; if there were no other.* And, indeed, this Opinion, that it was lawful to violate the Sabbath for Preſervation of Life, ſeems plainly to have obtained, before the Tranſlation of the *Septuagint*, who render the Words in *Exod.* xii. 16. to this Purpoſe, *Ye ſhall do no ſervile Work on it, but that which ſhall be done for the Safety of Life.*

THE Shew-bread (which in *Hebrew* is literally *the Bread of Faces*) was ſo called, not becauſe it was ſet upon the golden Table, which was in the Sanctuary, but becauſe it was placed *before the Lord*, i. e. not far from the Ark of the Covenant, which was the Symbol of his more immediate Preſence. Theſe Loaves, according to the Number of the Tribes, were twelve: They were made four ſquare, covered over with Leaves of Gold, and were of a conſiderable Bigneſs, having about three Quarts of Flour in each. They were ſerved up hot every Sabbath-day, and at the ſame Time the ſtale ones, which had been expoſed the whole preceding Week, were taken away, and allowed to be eat by none but the Prieſts, and that only in the Holy Place, which was the *Tabernacle* at firſt, and afterwards the Temple, Lev. xxiv. 5, *&c.* and the Reaſon of this Inſtitution ſeems to have been, to repreſent, in a more lively Manner, to the People, God's Government and Preſence among them; that as the Tabernacle firſt, and then the *Temple*, was his Palace and Place of Reſidence, ſo theſe weekly Services of Bread, Wine and Salt (ſay the *Jews*) were to denote his Habitation among them, as if he had been an earthly Prince, for whom ſuch Proviſions were made.

THERE are ſome who pretend to infer from the Paſſage of St. *Mark*, Chap. ii. 27. that the Words

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in St. *Matthew*, *The Son of Man is Lord alſo of the Sabbath*, Chap. xii. 8. are of the ſame Import with, *The Sabbath was made for Man*; ſo that the Son of Man is here put for all Men in general, and conſequently the Senſe of the Words muſt be, that every one is Lord of the Sabbath, to obſerve or diſpenſe with it, according to the Call or Exigency of his Affairs. But beſides that, the Phraſe, *Son of Man*, which is uſed no leſs than eighty-eight Times in the *New Teſtament*, is in all other Places ſet to denote our bleſſed *Lord*; and in *Dan.* vii. 13. from whence it is originally taken, it is thought, by all antient *Jews*, as well as *Chriſtians*, to ſignify the *Meſſiah* only; it is plain that theſe two Paſſages are diſtinct Propoſitions in St. *Mark*, Chap. ii. 27, 28. and that they can relate to no other than our Saviour *Chriſt*, becauſe he tells the *Phariſees*, and therein means himſelf, that in that Place, *there was one greater than the Temple*, i. e. whoſe prophetick Office was of more Conſequence to the World, than the ſacerdotal Adminiſtration in the *Temple*, and ought therefore, leaſt of all, to be interrupted by a ſuperſtitious Obſervation of the Sabbath. *The Sabbath was made for Man*, muſt therefore ſignify, that it was firſt appointed for the Good and Benefit of Man; and being ſo, it cannot reaſonably be ſuppoſed, to oblige him to any Thing ſo contrary to Humanity, as ſtarving or debilitating his Nature; and therefore, as *the Son of Man came not to deſtroy Men's Lives, but to ſave them*, he muſt have Power, in ſuch Caſes as concern the Good and Welfare of Mankind, to diſpenſe with the ſtrict Reſt of the Sabbath which the Law required.

THE Text, *Luke* vi. 9. is not contrary to what St. *Matthew*, Chap. xii. 10. tells us, *viz.* that *they aſked him*, becauſe both are true. They aſked him, *Whether it was lawful to heal?* and he, in Reply, ſays, *I alſo will aſk you one Thing. Is it lawful on the Sabbath to do Good, or to do Evil?* Luke vi. 9. We

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are not, however, to ſuppoſe, that by doing Evil, our Saviour propounded to the *Phariſees*, Whether, on the Sabbath-day it was lawful to do that, which, on any other Day, is utterly unlawful; for then, without doubt, they would have had a ready Anſwer for him; but only whether, according to the Inſtitution of the Sabbath, it was lawful to do Good, or not to do it, to ſave Life, or not to ſave it, when a Man had it equally in his Power. And the Reaſon why our Saviour inſtances in ſaving a Life is, becauſe it was a Maxim then among the *Jews*, that on the Sabbath-Day, all ſervile Work was prohibited, except where the Life of any Man or Beaſt was concerned; but the modern *Jews* are of a contrary Opinion, and in Hatred to *Chriſtians* (as *Grotius* thinks) have loaded the Obſervation of the Sabbath with ſuch trifling and ſuperſtitious Practices, as their Forefathers and antient Doctors never knew of.

WHETHER the *Herodians* were a particular Sect of Hereticks, or only a Party or Faction among the *Jews*, Authors have not determined. Thoſe who account them of the former Kind, ſuppoſe them to be Perſons, who, to ingratiate themſelves with *Herod*, either the Father or Son, (for in that they are not agreed) maintained him to be the expected *Meſſiah*, and who, in their other religious Principles, very much reſembled the *Phariſees*; and therefore what St. *Matthew* calls the Leaven of the *Phariſees*, chap. xvi. 6. St. *Mark* ſtiles the Leaven of *Herod*, chap. viii. 15. But thoſe who ſuppoſe them to be only a Party, make them great Eſpouſers of *Herod*'s ſecular Intereſt, and Supporters of his new acquired Sovereignty; a Set of Politicians, who favoured the Dominion of *Herod* and the *Romans*, (in Oppoſition to the *Phariſees*, who were zealous for the Liberty of their Nation) and were therefore very active in preſſing the People to pay their Tribute to *Ceſar*, as the only Means to make *Herod* ſit eaſy on his Throne. For which Reaſon, perhaps, they might be called

Herodians, or Royaliſts, as the other *Jews*, who were of the contrary Opinion, might properly be ſtiled Republicans.

IT was a Direction which our Saviour gave to his Diſciples, *when they perſecute you in this City, flee into another*, Matt. x. 23. and a Rule which himſelf put in Practice: For, when by his Doctrine and Miracles, he could do no Good upon Men, by Reaſon of *the Hardneſs of their Hearts*, Mark iii. 5. he uſually departed and retired, that he might give Place to their Wrath, and ſecure himſelf from their Malice, *Matt.* xii. 15. and *John* viii. 59. From hence we may learn, that in ſuch Caſes, it is very lawful to conſult our Safety, for in concealing the Truth, we do not betray it, but rather comply with our Lord's Precept, *not to caſt Pearl before Swine*, Matt. vii. 6.

THOUGH the Word *Idumæa* be no more than a *Greek* Name derived from the *Hebrew Edom*, yet it is not to be underſtood of the original Habitation of the *Edomites*, Mount *Seir*, but rather of that Southern Part of the Province of *Judea*, which, during the Captivity of the *Jews* at *Babylon*, being left deſtitute, or not ſufficiently inhabited by its Natives, ſeems to have been poſſeſſed by the neighbouring *Idumæans*. Theſe *Idumæans*, when afterwards conquered by the *Maccabees*, choſe rather to embrace the *Jewiſh* Religion, than to quit the Habitations they had taken Poſſeſſion of; and though, hereupon, they were incorporated into the Body of the *Jewiſh* Nation, yet that Tract of *Judæa*, which they inhabited, did not ſo ſoon loſe the Name of *Idumæa*, derived from them, but retained it, not only in our Saviour's Days, but for a conſiderable Time afterwards.

BUT to go on with our Narrative. Finding ſome Inconveniences in the Preſſure of the People, he ordered his Diſciples for the Time to come, to have a ſmall Veſſel always in Readineſs, for him to ſtep into upon Occaſion; and ſo retired to a ſolitary Mountain, where he continued all Night in Prayer, intending

tending next Morning to make an Election of ſome particular Perſons, both to be Witneſſes of his Actions and Diſcourſes, and after his Departure out of the World, his Vice-gerents upon Earth, Founders of his Church, and Propagators of his Goſpel.

THE Number of theſe, according to the Patriarchs, was Twelve; *Simon* (who is likewiſe named *Peter*) and *Andrew*, *James* (commonly called *the Great*) and *John*; *Philip* and *Bartholomew*; *Matthew* and *Thomas*; *James* (commonly called *the Leſs*) and *Simon* the *Canaanite*; *Jude* the Brother of *James*, and *Judas Iſcariot*, who ſo juſtly deſerved the Title of Traytor. To theſe he gave the Name of Apoſtles; and as he perceived the Multitude gathering round him, theſe he called nearer than the reſt to him, and began that moſt excellent Diſcourſe which comprizes all the great Principles of the *Chriſtian* Religion, and is commonly called the *Sermon on the Mount*.

HEREIN he pronounces diverſe Bleſſings, both Spiritual and Temporal, to ſuch as the Generality of the World eſteemed Miſerable; to the Poor in Spirit, or humble minded; to the Kind and Merciful; to the pious Mourners; to the Peace-makers; to the Meek and Patient; to the pure in Heart; to ſuch as hunger and thirſt after Righteouſneſs; and to ſuch as are perſecuted upon the Account thereof. Herein he inſtructs the Apoſtles, more eſpecially in their Duty; and in ſeveral Compariſons ſetting before them the high Station, wherein he had ſo lately placed them, and how much it would redound to their Honour, if they behaved well, and to their Diſhonour, if otherwiſe; he recommends above all other Things, Purity of Life and Converſation. Herein he expounds the true Meaning, and ſhews the juſt Extent of ſeveral moral Precepts, *viz.* The Laws againſt Murder, againſt Adultery, againſt Perjury; that concerning Retalliation, and that of loving our Neighbour; and reſcues them from the wretched Gloſſes and Interpretations which the *Jews* had put

upon them. Herein he explains and teaches the proper Method of performing, with Acceptance, the ſeveral Duties of Charity to the Poor, Prayer and Faſting. Herein he diſſuades us from all covetous Inclinations, and anxious Thoughts concerning the Things of this World, from a Conſciouſneſs of our being under the providential Care of God: And having laid down ſeveral other Precepts and Inſtructions, he concludes the whole with this Admonition, *That whoever heard, believed and practiſed the Things contained in his Diſcourſes, would, in the Event, be like a wiſe Builder, who laid the Foundation of his Houſe upon a Rock, not to be affected by Wind or Weather; but that he, who heard and practiſed them not, would be like a Man, who built his Houſe upon the Sand, ſoon to be blown down by the Winds, and waſhed away by the Floods.*

THIS Sermon was delivered with ſuch a Grace and Majeſty, as gained the Applauſe of the whole Audience, and made them very readily declare their Senſe of the Difference between ſuch divine Diſcourſes, and the jejune Harangues of the ordinary Teachers the *Scribes*; and to confirm his Doctrine by the Teſtimony of Miracles, our Bleſſed Saviour, upon his Deſcent from the Mount, healed a Leper, and then remitted him to the Prieſt, to make his Oblation in Acknowledgement of his Cure.

LET us explain ſome Things we have been relating.

SOME have thought that the *Greek* Words for, *He went out into a Mountain to pray*, ſhould be rendered *in a Houſe of Prayer of God*, or in a *Synagogue* dedicated to the Service of God; but then they will be concerned to find out any Houſe of Prayer, which at that Time ſtood on a Mountain, or any, except the Temple, which was called by that Name: Nor can we conceive why our Lord ſhould go out into a Mountain to pray, if it were not for the Privacy and Retirement of it, which he could not have had

had in any common Place of divine Worſhip. Our Saviour, however, being about to ſend out his twelve Apoſtles, thought that ſo great a Work as could not be done, without offering up his ſolemn Addreſſes to God, for their Succeſs; and accordingly having found a Place of Retirement, he thither betook himſelf, and, as the *Evangeliſts* inform us, continued all Night in Prayer, leaving the Biſhops and Governors of his Church an Example what they are to do in the great and momentous Affair of appointing Perſons to the Miniſtry of the Goſpel.

THESE two Brothers, *James* and *John*, our Saviour calls *Boanerges*, a Word compoſed of two *Hebrew* or *Syriac* Words, but what have ſuffered ſome Alteration in their paſſing into the *Greek* Language. For whether it be, that the *Greek* Tranſcriber has miſtaken them, or that this might be the corrupt Way of pronouncing them in *Galilee*, certain it is, that the Original are *Benoi Rehem*, denoting *Sons of Thunder*, or *of a Tempeſt*, a Name given them in Alluſion to the natural Heat and Zeal of their Temper, and that Vehemence and Efficacy wherewith our Saviour foreſaw that they would preach the Goſpel. Of the former of theſe they gave an early Inſtance, in their Deſire to *call down Fire from Heaven* to conſume the *Samaritans*, Luke ix. 54. And in the *Acts of the Apoſtles*, we find that *Peter* and *John* are the chief Actors and Speakers in the Defence and Propagation of the Goſpel; and that the Zeal of *James* and *Peter* ſeems to be the Reaſon, why the one was ſlain by *Herod*, and the other impriſoned, in order to the like Execution.

THE Name given here to the Apoſtle *Bartholomew*, is not his proper but patronymical Name, and imports only the Son of *Tholomew*, or *Tolmai*: So that we are ſtill at a Loſs for his perſonal Name, unleſs we will admit of the Conjecture, that he was indeed no more than *Nathanael*. To this Purpoſe, it is remarkable, 1ſt, That as no other *Evangeliſt* makes mention

mention of *Nathanael*, but St. *John*, ſo he never once makes mention of *Bartholomew*. 2dly, That in the Catalogue of the Apoſtles, *Philip* and *Bartholomew* are always coupled together, and were, probably, ſent out together to preach the Goſpel: And fit Companions they were, ſuppoſing that *Nathanael* to be the Man, with whom, it is plain, that *Philip* had an Intimacy, and was the firſt Inſtrument of bringing him to *Jeſus*. 3dly, That this *Nathanael* is by St. *John*, Chap. xxi. 2. named in Company with ſeveral of the Apoſtles, upon our Saviour's ſhewing himſelf at the Sea of *Tiberias*, after his Reſurrection, which the *Evangeliſt* tells us, was the third Time of his doing ſo, Ver. 14. and this is ſome Preſumption that he was of them. 4thly, That at the two former Times, 'tis expreſly ſaid that he appeared to the Eleven, *John* xx. 19, 26. And here, at the third Time of his Appearance, thoſe that are named with *Nathanael*, are all of that Number. From theſe Conſiderations it is more than probable, that *Nathanael*, was one of the Apoſtles; which can only be accounted for, by ſuppoſing that St. *John* calls the ſame Perſon by his proper Name *Nathaniel*, whom the other *Evangeliſt* calls by his patronymical, *Bartholomew*.

THOMAS, in *Hebrew*, or *Syriac* either, ſignifies a *Twin*, and ſo is the ſame with *Didymus*, that other Name whereby this Apoſtle is ſometimes called.

SOME are of Opinion, that *Simon* is here called the *Canaanite* from *Cana*, a little Town in *Galilee*, the Place of his Birth and Habitation; but others rather think, that ſince the Apoſtle is, by St. *Luke*, Chap. vi. 15. called *Zelotes*. The *Canaanites* and *Zelotes* are perfectly the ſame, juſt as *Cephas* and *Peter*, *Tabitha* and *Dorcas* are. That there was a Faction among the *Jews*, a little before the Deſtruction of their City and Nation, who aſſumed to themſelves the Title of *Zealots* (out of an hypocritical Oſtenta-

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tion of Holineſs, though, at the ſame Time, in their Hearts and Practices they were the lewdeſt of Men) *Joſephus* gives us a large and lamentable Account; but whether that Faction was in the Beginning of our Saviour's Time, or whether to be of the Number of Zealots, as the Hiſtorian has deſcribed, may not be an Injury and Reproach to this Apoſtle's Memory, is much to be doubted.

THE Surname of *Judas*, namely, *Iſcariot*, may be taken either from the Place of his Birth, which was *Carioth*, in the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, whereof we have Mention in *Joſh.* xv. 25. and *Amos* xi. 2. or from the *Syriac* Word *Secariat*, denoting the *Purſe* or *Wallet*, which it was the Office of this *Judas* to carry; or from the Word *Aſhara* or *Iſcara*, which ſignifies to *ſtrangle*; and therefore a Name which the *Evangeliſts* might give him after his Death: But all theſe Etymologies are no more than mere Conjectures.

THE Wiſdom of *Chriſt* ſaw fit to admit *Judas* into the Number of his Diſciples, that by him the Counſel of God, in giving up his Son to Death, and the Predictions of the Prophets might be fulfilled, *Acts* i. 16. This very Perſon, however, is by our Lord ſent to preach the Goſpel, to cure Diſeaſes, and to caſt out Devils, who had *himſelf a Devil*, John vi. 70. thereby to teach us that the Miſſion of a Perſon may be valid, though he be not ſanctified, that in Things belonging to the miniſterial Office, we ſhould hearken, even to ſuch Perſons and obey them.

THE *Greek* Word for *Apoſtle*, ſignifies an *Envoy*, and was a Name given by the *Jews* to any Meſſenger in general, but more eſpecially to ſuch Perſons as were ſent by the High-prieſt and Heads of the People, to collect the Tithes and other Dues belonging to the *Temple* or *Synagogue*, or to carry their Orders and Mandates to the Cities and Provinces, when any Affairs, relating to Religion, were tranſacted; and

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to this Cuſtom St. *Paul* ſeems to allude, where he ſtiles himſelf *an Apoſtle, not of Man, neither by Man, but of* Jeſus Chriſt, *Gal.* v. 1. Our Saviour, indeed, as he was no Lover of Innovations, took the Word from among the *Jews*; but then he raiſed it to a much higher and more honourable Signification; for himſelf declares, that he ſent out his Apoſtles, even as his Father ſent out him, *John* xx. 21. *i. e.* with a full Commiſſion to act in his ſtead, even as he did in God's: And accordingly we may obſerve, that as the Father gave Judgment to the Son, *John* v. 22. ſo in Effect, the Son gives Judgment to the Apoſtles, *Matt.* xix. 28. *Luke* xxii. 30. and 2 *Cor.* x. 6. that, as the Father gave the Son Power to forgive Sins upon Earth, *Matt.* x. 6. ſo the Son gives Power to the Apoſtles to remit Sins on Earth likewiſe, *John* xx. 23. that as the Father gave the Son the Honour to ſit down with him on his Throne, ſo the Son gave the Apoſtles the Privilege to ſit with him on Thrones, *Matt.* ix. 28. and *Luke* xxi. 30. and that, as the Father gave the Son to be the Foundation or Corner-ſtone of the Church, *Matt.* xx. 42. ſo the Son gave the Apoſtles to be Foundations upon a Foundation, for ſo the Church is ſaid to be built upon the *Foundation of the Apoſtles*, Chriſt *being the chief Corner-ſtone*, Eph. ii. 20.

THE Mountain, where our Lord delivered his Diſcourſe is generally ſuppoſed to be *Tabor*; for, by comparing St. *Mark*, Chap. xxxvii. 12. with the other Evangeliſts, *Matt.* xii. 14, 15. and *Luke* vi. 12, *&c.* we may perceive, that it was not far diſtant from ſome Part of the Sea of *Tiberias*, whither our Lord had retired very lately from the *Phariſees*, and about five or ſix Leagues from *Capernaum*, whither he returned after his Deſcent from this Mount. But then the Queſtion is, whether this Sermon be the ſame with what we find recorded by St. *Luke*, Chap. vi. 12? Now, in order to reſolve this, we may obſerve, *firſt*, that the Sermon in St. *Matthew*

was

was delivered before the healing of the Leper, Chap. viii. 2. whereas St. *Luke*, who promiſes to diſcoureſ in order of what *Chriſt* did, gives us firſt the Story of the Leper, Chap. v. 12. and then an Account of *Chriſt*'s Sermon, Chap. vi. 27. 2*dly*, That the Sermon in St. *Matthew*, our Lord preached on the Mount, and called his Diſciples up to him, whereas St. *Luke* informs us, that our Lord came down with his Diſciples from a Mount, and ſtood in the Plain, and from thence preached what he recorded, ver. 17. And 3*dly*, That St. *Luke* omits the much greater Part of the Sermon, as it is recorded by St. *Matthew*, mentions only four Beatitudes, whereas St. *Matthew* ſpeaks of Eight, and has added four Woes, ver. 24. *&c.* whereof we find no Indications in St. *Matthew*. Since the Sermons then are ſo very different in their Matter, as well as in the Circumſtances of Time and Place, it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that they are not the ſame; though conſidering, that after both the Sermons, we find our Lord returning to *Capernaum*, and healing the Centurion's Servant, *Matt.* viii. 5. and *Luke* vii. 1. we may probably conjecture, that he ſpake the Sermon in St. *Matthew*, whilſt he was ſitting on the Mount, to his Diſciples; but that, in St. *Luke*, he afterwards ſpake, when he came down into the Plain, Chap vi. 17. in the Audience of all the People, Chap. vii. 1.

THE Words in the Text, *He taught them as one that had Authority, and not as the Scribes*, Matt. vii. 29. But they certainly are miſtaken, who interpret the Words in this Senſe,——"He taught them as "the Author of the Doctrine which he preached, "as one, who had Authority in his own Name to "propound the Terms of Life and Death," becauſe it is not only contrary to the Nature of his prophetick Office, but to his own frequent Declarations, that the *Doctrine, which he taught, was not his own, but his who ſent him; and that he ſpake, not of himſelf,*

ſelf, or in his own Name, but as he had heard from his Father, and as he had commanded him to ſpeak, John vii. 16, 17, 18. viii. 28. xii. 49. xiv. 10. and therefore the true Interpetation is, what *Lightfoot*, and others give us, *viz. That he ſpake as a Prophet, having Authority from God to deliver his Meſſage to them*, and not as the Scribes, who pretended *only to deliver the Traditions of their Foreſathers, and to teach them no more, than what they had learned from* Hillel, Shemaia, Abtalion, *&c.*

LET us now reſume the Hiſtory. At his Return to *Capernaum* he cured, at a Diſtance, the favourite Servant of the *Roman* Centurion, who had made an ample Declaration of his Divine Power, and thereupon received from him as ample a Commendation of his Faith; and, at his Arrival at the Gates of *Nain*, he reſtored to Life a Widow's only Son, as the People were carrying him out to his Funeral, to the great Joy and Comfort of his Parent, and the no leſs Wonder and Aſtoniſhment of the Spectators, who, upon this Occaſion, glorified God, and publickly declared, that *a mighty Prophet was ſprung up among them, and that God had viſited his People.*

UPON the Fame of this, and ſeveral other Miracles, which our Saviour did daily, *John the Baptiſt*, who was ſtill in Priſon, ſent two of his Diſciples to enquire of him, whether he himſelf was the promiſed *Meſſiah*, or ſome other Perſon was to appear in that Character? As our Lord was at that Time working Miracles, curing the Deaf, the Lame, the Blind, *&c.* And inſtructing the People that were gathered about him, inſtead of giving a direct Anſwer to their Queſtion, he bid them go, and report what they ſaw to their Maſter; and when he had thus diſmiſſed them, he began to diſcourſe to the People concerning *John*, giving a large Encomium of the Auſterity and Holineſs of his Perſon, the Greatneſs of his Function, and Divinity of his Commiſſion; and hence taking Occaſion to blame the

Perverſeneſs

Perverſeneſs of the Age, in rejecting both his and the *Baptiſt*'s Teſtimony, (though the *Baptiſt* was a Man of a mortified Deportment, and he a Perſon of a free and affable Behaviour, ſo that nothing would pleaſe them) he proceeded to upbraid the ſeveral Cities, where moſt of his Miracles had been wrought, *viz. Chorazim*, *Bethſaida*, and, more eſpecially, *Capernaum*, with their Obſtinacy and Impenitence; and having declared, that the Myſteries of the *Goſpel-Revelation* were better adapted to the Humble and Modeſt, than to the Proud and Worldly-wiſe, he concludes his Diſcourſe with an Exhortation to ſuch as were thus qualified to be his Diſciples, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you Reſt*, &c.

No ſooner had he finiſhed this Diſcourſe, but a rich *Phariſee*, whoſe Name was *Simon*, invited him to Dinner; but, while he was at Table, there happened an Incident ſomewhat remarkable: For a certain Woman, who, not long before, had been noted for a lewd Liver, came into the Houſe, and throwing herſelf at the Feet of *Jeſus*, waſhed them with the Tears which flowed from her Eyes, and then, having wiped them with her Hair, ſhe kiſſed them, and anointed them with very precious Ointment.

SIMON, who ſtill retained ſomething of the cenſorious Spirit of his Sect, ſeeing this Woman thus buſy in expreſſing her Love and Veneration for *Jeſus*, began to think within himſelf, that he could not poſſibly be a Prophet, otherwiſe he would have known the Woman to be infamous, and conſequently, not ſuffered her to touch him: But our Saviour, who well underſtood *Simon*'s Thoughts, propoſed to him a Parable of a certain Creditor, who had two Debtors, one of which owed him ten times as much as the other, but, becauſe both of them were inſolvent, he frankly forgave them both; and then, gaining from him a Confeſſion, that the

Debtor, to whom the larger Sum was forgiven, would in Gratitude be bound to love the Creditor moſt, he turned to the Woman, and (by way of Application) not only apologized both for her Behaviour and his own, but reproached his Hoſt likewiſe, for having omitted ſome Inſtances of Reſpect and Civility, which this contemptible Woman (as he eſteemed her) had abundantly ſupplied. And therefore, in Return for ſuch uncommon Kindneſs, he gave her a full Pardon and Abſolution of all her Sins, which ſome in the Company ſeemed to reſent, as an Invaſion of the Divine Prerogative, but that gave him no Manner of Uneaſineſs.

UPON his leaving *Nain*, he made a Progreſs, for ſome Months, round other Parts of *Galilee*, accompanied with his Apoſtles, and ſeveral devout Women, whom he had cured of ſundry Diſeaſes, and who, in Gratitude, attended his Perſon, and out of their own Subſtance adminiſtered to his Neceſſities; till returning, at length, to his own City, *Capernaum*, ſuch Multitudes of People, upon the Rumour of his being come again, reſorted to him, that neither he, nor his Diſciples could find Time to eat: But *his Meat was to do the Will of God*, by healing the Sick, and relieving the Oppreſſed; and therefore, as ſoon as a poor *Demoniack*, both blind and dumb, was brought before him, he immediately reſtored him both to his Speech and Eye-ſight, inſomuch that all who ſaw it were greatly aſtoniſhed; and, with a general Voice, declared, that the Perſon who did ſuch wonderful Works, could be no other than the promiſed *Meſſiah*.

THE *Phariſees* however, and Doctors of the Law, who came from *Jeruſalem*, gave another Turn to this Miracle: They aſcribed it to the Power of the Devil, even to *Beelzebub*, the Chief of the Devils; and therefore our bleſſed Saviour, by the Compariſon of a Kingdom or Houſe divided againſt itſelf (which is the readieſt Way to bring it to Deſolation)

ſolation) ſhews the Abſurdity of their Allegations, ſince, by that Means, the Devil would take the moſt effectual Courſe to deſtroy his own Empire. Nay, he argues from their own Pretenſions of having certain allowed *Exorciſts* among them, that evil Spirits may be caſt out by the Finger of God; that, when they were apparently ſo, it was very manifeſt, that the Kingdom of God, or the *Meſſiah*, was come among them; that obſtinately to reſiſt the Evidence of ſuch Miracles, or to aſcribe them to a diabolical Power, was that *Sin againſt the Holy Ghoſt*, which is of a Nature unpardonable; and that, ſince they had been ſo impious, as to blaſpheme the Holy Spirit, by which he wrought them, nothing leſs could be expected, than that the Devils, ejected by him, finding no where among the *Heathens* ſuch deſireable Habitations of Reſt and Contentment, as among them, would endeavour to return, with ſeveral others worſe than themſelves, and, by their prodigious Wickedneſs and obſtinate Infidelity, finding them more prepared than ever to receive them, would there take up their ſettled Abode, and having made them more incredulous and obdurate, more impure and wicked, more hypocritical and blaſphemous, than they were before, would bring upon them too a more lamentable Deſtruction.

ALL this however hindered not the Scribes and *Phariſees* from demanding of our Saviour ſome new Sign or Miracle, in Evidence of his Miſſion; but as he had given them a ſufficient Number of theſe already, he only referred them to one, that would not come to paſs till after his Death, namely, that of *Jonas*, whoſe Deliverance from the Whale's Belly, after three Days Confinement, was an eminent Type of his Reſurrection, after as long a Continuance of his Body in the Bowels of the Earth; and thence took Occaſion to remind them, that the Inhabitants of *Nineveh*, a Pagan City, and alſo the Queen of *Sheba*, ſhould riſe up in Judgment againſt that Generation,

Generation, and condemn it, becauſe the former repented at the Preaching of *Jonas*, and the latter took a vaſt Journey to partake of the Benefits of *Solomon*'s Wiſdom, whereas they refuſed to hearken to one, who was inconteſtibly greater than either *Jonas* or *Solomon*.

WHILE he was continuing his Diſcourſe in this manner, Word was brought, that his Mother and ſome other Kinsfolk were at the Door, deſiring to ſpeak with him; (for, fearing either that he might be too much tranſported by his Miniſtry, or grow faint for want of eating, or be endangered by the Throng, they came to get him away) but, being diſſatisfied with their unſeaſonable Interruption, he took Occaſion to inform the Audience, that all worldly Relations were of no leſs Conſideration, than the Ties of Duty and Religion; that the Names of Mother and Brother, which are ſanctified by the Laws of God and Nature, were made much more ſacred, when a ſpiritual Kindred does ſupervene; and ſo turning to his Diſciples, he declared, that they were his trueſt Relations, *who heard the Word of God, and practiſed it*.

THE ſame Day he went out of the Houſe where he commonly abode, and, for the greater Conveniency of teaching the People, repaired to the Sea-ſhore, where, being followed by the ſame Multitudes, to avoid the Throng he went on board a Veſſel, and from thence taught them in Parables, an uſual way of Inſtruction among the *Jews*, but what he had not practiſed before, thereby to engage the Attention and accommodate himſelf to the Capacity of thoſe that heard him. By the Parable of the Sower, he repreſented the different Succeſſes of the Goſpel, according to the different Diſpoſitions of its Hearers: by the Tares growing among the good Seed, the Mixture of the Wicked and Godly under the ſame Profeſſion of *Chriſtianity*; by the Grain of Muſtard-ſeed, and the little Piece of Leaven, the wonderful

wonderful Increaſe and Propagation of the Goſpel from ſmall Beginnings; by the Treaſure in the Field, and the Pearl of great Price, the ineſtimable Benefits, that would accrue to the true Profeſſors of Religion; but that the Profeſſion of it would include a mixt Multitude, and therefore like a Net, caſt into the Sea, which incloſes Fiſhes of all kinds, ſome good, and ſome bad, the Good to be preſerved, but the Bad caſt away. This is the Explication which our Lord gave his Diſciples of theſe ſeveral Parables; and when, by their Anſwer, he perceived that they underſtood them all, he concluded his Diſcourſe with one Similitude more, *viz.* That *every Goſpel-Teacher ought to reſemble a well furniſhed Houſe-keeper, who brings all Things out of his Repoſitory, both old and new, according to the Occaſions of his Gueſts.*

IT will be now proper to make Remarks on what we have juſt now related.

A *CENTURION* was an Officer commanding an hundred Men, much of the ſame Rank and Station of one of our Captains, and belonged to the *Iron Legion* (as it was called) which uſually quartered in *Judea.*

NAIM, or *Nain*, ſo called for the Pleaſantneſs of its Situation, was a Town of *Galilee*, about two Leagues from *Nazareth*, and not ſo much from Mount *Tabor*, between which and the City ran the River *Kiſon:* And from our Saviour's meeting the Funeral coming out at the Gates, we may learn, that it was a Cuſtom among the *Jews* to bury their Dead out of the City, becauſe they looked upon their Graves, as Places full of Pollution; whereas we *Chriſtians*, in hopes of a joyful Reſurrection, and upon Preſumption that many of thoſe, whoſe Bodies are repoſited in the Earth, are in a State of Felicity in Heaven, look upon theſe Places with great Reſpect and Veneration, and accordingly have our Tombs erected

erected always very near, and ſometimes within the Body of our Churches.

THE People of *Naim* do, *Luke* vii. 16. acknowledge *Jeſus* to be the *Meſſiah*, or that great Prophet, whom *Moſes* had promiſed to the *Jews*: *The Lord thy God will raiſe up unto thee a Prophet, from the midſt of thee, of thy Brethren, like unto me, unto him ſhall ye hearken*, Deut. xviii. 15. for they deſcribe this Prophet in the very ſame Terms, that *Zacharias*, the Father of *John the Baptiſt*, makes uſe of to denote the *Meſſiah*, *The Lord hath viſited his People*, Luke i. 68.

THE Words in the Text, *Art thou he that ſhould come*, or rather, *he that is coming?* For the Prophecies of the *Meſſiah* in the *Old Teſtament* were ſo plain, and yet his Perſon or Name ſo unknown to the *Jews*, that they were wont to expreſs it by ſome Circumlocution, and more eſpecially by this of *he that cometh*, for ſo he is termed, *Matt.* iii. 11. xxi. 9. *Luke* vii. 20. xix. 38. *John* xii. 13. and *Heb.* x. 37, *&c.* and this Name they gathered from *Habakkuk*, where he is called, *he that ſhall come*, Chap. ii. 3. and from *Daniel*, where he is ſtiled, *he that cometh with the Clouds of Heaven*, Chap. vii. 13.

IF it be aſked, How the ſeeing of theſe Things done by our Saviour could be a ſufficient Argument to *John*'s Diſciples, that he was, in Truth, the *Meſſiah?* The Reply is, that the Performance of theſe Things was exactly anſwering the Character which the Prophet had given the *Meſſiah*, That *at the Coming of God to ſave them, the Eyes of the Blind ſhould be opened, and the Ears of the Deaf unſtopped*; that *the Lame ſhould ſing*, Iſaiah xxxv. 4, *&c.* And therefore, inſtead of giving them a direct Anſwer, which might be liable to the old Objection of his *bearing Record of himſelf*, John viii. 13. our Saviour refers them to the Miracles they ſaw him do; Miracles of the ſame Kind that were predicted of the *Meſſiah*, and then leaves it to their own Maſter to draw

draw the Concluſions from thence; which was a Method of Conviction more ſhort and ſtrong, and withal more agreeable to our Saviour's Modeſty and great Humility, than any long Detail of Arguments would have proved.

MAIMONIDES obſerves, that though the *Jews* generally reckon eleven Degrees of Prophecy, yet two of theſe were ſomething more ſublime and excellent than ordinary Prophecy. The one of theſe was what they called the *Gradus Moſaicus*, when the Prophet had a familiar Converſe with God upon all Occaſions; and the other, when he had Revelations, not from a Dream or Extaſy, but an immediate Dictate of the Holy Ghoſt. Of this ſort was *John the Baptiſt*, who was plainly told by the Father, *Matt.* iii. 17. *John* xiii. 3. and as plainly proclaimed it to others, that Jeſus *was the Lamb of God*. Other Prophets ſpeak of the Coming of *Chriſt*, but then they did it in a dark and obſcure Manner: They ſaw him only at a Diſtance, in a Dream, or in a Viſion of the Night, and couched their Predictions under a Veil of enigmatical Phraſes; but the *Baptiſt* ſpake of him openly and diſtinctly. He knew him; he was converſant with him; he pointed him out to the People; he had, in ſhort, the Honour of baptizing him, and hearing the Voice from Heaven teſtifying of him, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed*. And upon theſe Accounts we find him called a great and illuſtrious Perſon, *Luke* i. 15. one *filled with the Holy Ghoſt*; and, by way of Excellence, *the Prophet of the Moſt High*, ver. 16.

THE Words of our Saviour, *We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented*, Matt. xi. 17. ſeem to be a Proverb, founded upon a Cuſtom among the *Jewiſh* Children, to imitate what they ſaw done by others upon greater Occaſions, and particularly the Cuſtom in Feſtivities or Funerals; when, in the former, as ſoon as the Muſician ſtruck up a Tune,

the Company began to dance to his Pipe; and, in the latter, as ſoon as ſome old Women had begun the mournful Song, the reſt followed, lamenting, and beating their Breaſts. Theſe the Children were uſed to act, and perſonate in the Streets at play; and when one had begun the Muſician's Part, and another the old Woman's Part, and the reſt did not follow them in theirs, this gave Occaſion to the proverbial Saying, which our Saviour applies to the preſent Purpoſe in this Senſe; "I, and *John*, have "both of us invited you to enter into the Kingdom of "Heaven, or to turn to God by Repentance: "*John*, by the Auſterity of his Life, and I, by my "Affability and Courteſy, have endeavoured to re- "commend ourſelves; but all to no Purpoſe. "You will neither mourn with him, nor laugh with "me; but, for that very Reaſon, cenſure and re- "vile our different Behaviour, accounting him, for "his reſerved Temper, no better than a melancholy "kind of Madman: and me, for my open and "free Converſation, a mere Glutton and Wine- "bibber."

TO come unto Chriſt, in the Phraſe of the *New Teſtament*, is to believe in him, and to become one of his Diſciples; and this Invitation our Saviour gives to all Mankind in general, and to the *Jews* in particular. To all Mankind, foraſmuch as all, without the Knowledge of *Chriſt*, are heavy laden with the Burden of their Sins, and the Calamities incident to Life; are ſurrounded with a Cloud of Ignorance, and held in Bondage through the Fear of Death: And to the *Jews* in particular, foraſmuch as they, under their Diſpenſation, were oppreſſed with a Load of Ceremonies, *a Yoke, which neither they, nor their Fathers were able to bear*, Acts xv. 10. beſides the additional Weight, which the *Phariſees* laid upon them, by their Traditions, *heavy Burdens, and grievous to be born*, Matt. xviii. 4.

IT is not a little ſtrange that any Interpreters ſhould ever imagine, that the Story of a rich *Phariſee* inviting our Saviour to Dinner, as related by St. *Luke*, ſhould be the ſame with that related in *Matt.* xxvi. *Mark* xv. and *John* xii. ſince the Hiſtories agree ſcarce in any Thing, unleſs it be in bringing the *Alabaſter Box of Ointment*, and *anointing* our Saviour's Feet, which, in theſe Countries, eſpecially at great Entertainments, was no uncommon Thing. But now the Anointing, in the other *Evangeliſts*, was done at *Bethany*, within two Miles of *Jeruſalem*; *this*, in St. *Luke*, in *Galilee*; *that*, in the Houſe of one *Simon*, *a Phariſee*; *that*, but a little before our Saviour's Paſſion; *this*, a conſiderable Time before it. At *that*, *Judas* was offended for the Waſte of the Ointment; at *this*, *Simon* for the Woman's touching our Saviour: Upon *that* Occaſion our Lord vindicates the Woman from one Head of Argument, and upon *this* from another. So that all Circumſtances make it plain, that theſe were different Actions, done by different Perſons, and at different Times.

WHO this Woman was, the Goſpel no where tells us. We read indeed of three Perſons, who, by ſeveral *Evangeliſts*, are ſaid to have anointed our our Lord's Head and Feet, *viz.* *Mary Magdalene*, *Mary* the Siſter of *Lazarus*, and this other Woman, whom St. *Luke* calls *a Sinner*: And ſome Commentators make theſe three to be one and the ſame Perſon. It is to be obſerved however, that the Siſter of *Lazarus* is, all along, repreſented as a Perſon of great Sobriety and Virtue, who always lived at *Bethany*, was none of our Lord's Attendants, nor ever came into *Galilee*; and, conſequently, was a Woman diſtinct from *Mary Magdalene*, who was of his Retinue, *Luke* viii. 2. and from this other Woman, who anointed his Feet in *Simon*'s Houſe: But, whether this *Mary Magdalene*, and this Woman, here called *a Sinner*, might not be the ſame Perſon, is not ſo

eaſy to determine. The Characteriſtick of *Magdalene* is, that ſhe was the Perſon, *out of whom our Lord had caſt ſeven Devils*; but then, if the Ejection of theſe Devils be underſtood (as ſome will have it) in an allegorical Senſe, the Words will well ſuit with the Sinner in St. *Luke*; or, ſuppoſe they were real Devils, the Ejection of them might be ſome Time before her coming into *Simon*'s Houſe, and (as our Saviour's Vindication of her ſeems to imply) her Reformation conſequent thereupon, though *Simon* knew nothing of it. For theſe Reaſons ſome have imagined, that the *Sinner* in St. *Luke*, and *Mary Magdalene*, were both the ſame Perſon; and that ſhe was called *Magdalene*, from the Town and Caſtle of *Magdal*, where her Huſband, who had been a Man of great Diſtinction, but then dead, had lately his Habitation. It muſt not be diſſembled however, that the moſt general and prevailing Opinion is, that theſe were two different and diſtinct Women.

THE Manner of the *Eaſtern* People was to lie upon a kind of Bed or Couch, while they were at Meat; to put off their Sandals before they lay down, and to have their Servants and Domeſticks ſtand behind at their Feet; ſo that this Woman wanted not an Opportunity to expreſs her Devotion to our Lord, while he was in this Poſture.

THAT it was a cuſtomary Thing among the Ancients, eſpecially at great Entertainments, to uſe Ointments and coſtly Perfumes, appears from ſeveral Authorities. The *Pſalmiſt* plainly informs us, that this was the Cuſtom of the *Jews*, when in Acknowledgement of God's great Bounty to him, he declares, *Thou haſt prepared a Table for me, thou haſt anointed my Head with Oil, and my Cup ſhall be full*, Pſal. xxiii. 5. The *Scholiaſt* upon *Ariſtophanes* acquaints us with the ſame Cuſtom among the *Greeks*, when he makes it a Rule, *that they who invite to an Entertainment, ſhould bring forth to their Gueſts Crowns and Ointments*. The general Cuſtom indeed, upon

theſe

theſe Occaſions, was to anoint the Head, and very ſeldom the Feet: But, beſides that the latter was a Token of more Humility, and no leſs Eſteem in this Woman, ſhe could not perhaps have an Opportunity of coming at our Saviour's Head, without giving ſome Diſturbance to the Company.

THOUGH the *Jewiſh* Religion permitted Harlots of their own Nation to enjoy all the Privileges of other Women, except that their Oblations were rejected as impure, yet the *Phariſees*, who pretended to a greater Degree of Sanctity than others, would not admit them to civil Uſage, or the common Benefits of Society, and thought Religion itſelf, and the Honour of every Prophet, concerned in this Preciſeneſs. This was the Reaſon of *Simon*'s making this Objection within himſelf: But therein he draws three falſe Concluſions, *firſt*, That had *Jeſus* been a Prophet, he muſt have known what the Woman was; as if Prophets knew every Thing, and were able to look into the Secrets of the Heart. *2dly*, That, as this Woman was a Sinner, our Saviour ſhould not have ſuffered her to touch him; as if the external Touch of a Perſon, engaged in any vicious Courſe, could communicate Pollution to one that was innocent. And *3dly*, That this Woman, whom he knew to be a Sinner ſome Time before, was ſtill in the ſame Condition; as if it were not in the Power of God, at any Time, to touch the Heart, and, in a Moment, to inſpire ſincere Repentance.

IT was cuſtomary, ſays St. *Jerom*, on *Matt.* xxvii. 55. among the *Jews*, for Women, and eſpecially for Widows, to miniſter Neceſſaries to their Teachers, and this without any Scandal or Imputation upon their Honour. Our Saviour lays it down as a general Rule, that *the Labourer is worthy of his Hire*, Luke x. 7. and the Apoſtle accounts it no more than Juſtice, that they who *ſow* to others *ſpiritual Things*, ſhould be allowed to reap their *carnal*, 1 Cor. ix. 11. Of what Condition or Quality theſe Women

Women were, that attended our Lord, we are not told: They might be Virgins, Widows, or Wives, who had an Allowance for themſelves from their Huſbands: However, it could be no Injuſtice done to their Families, to give unto him, who was Lord of all that they, and their Huſbands poſſeſſed; and who, *though he was rich, yet, for our ſakes, became poor, that we, through his Poverty, might be rich*, 2 Cor. viii. 9.

THAT which made the *Phariſees* thus calumniate our Saviour's Miracles, was their finding the People induced by them to believe, that he was the *Son of* David, *Matt.* xii. 23. which was but another Word for the *Meſſiah*, the *King of the* Jews. For, though they might have ſome Apprehenſions, that if this Belief obtained, it might poſſibly bring the Power of the *Romans* upon them, *John* ix. 48. yet their chief Fear was, that the Greatneſs of his Miracles, and Excellence of his Doctrine, would put an End to their Credit and Authority among the People, ſince they were conſcious to themſelves, that they could not vye with him in either.

BY ſeveral Paſſages in the *Goſpel*, it ſeems evident, that the *Jews*, at this Time, had a Notion of a kind of Empire, and Subordination among the infernal Powers, and that the Prince of this Empire was called *Beelzebub*. *Beelzebub* ſignifies properly the *God of Flies*; but why a Name of ſo mean an Import ſhould denote the Head of the apoſtate Angels, it is not ſo eaſy a matter to determine, unleſs we will admit of this Conjecture, *viz.* that, as the People of *Ekron* had an Idol, which they ſtiled *Beelſamen*, *i. e.* the *God of Heaven*, by other Nations called *Jupiter Olympius*; the *Jews*, who uſed to give Nicknames, or Names of Contempt to all falſe Gods, called it ſometimes *Beelzebub*, or the *God-Fly*, becauſe theſe Heathens worſhipped it under the Figure of that Inſect, and ſometimes *Beelzebub*, or the *God of Ordure*, becauſe ſome ſort of Flies delight to feed on Excre-

ments.

ments. However this be, 'tis certain that the Apoſtles, in ſeveral Places of their Writings, do ſeem to inſinuate, that among the apoſtate Spirits, there was one ſuperior to the reſt, whom therefore they call *the Prince of Darkneſs*, Luke xvii. 53. *the Prince of this World*, John xii. 31. and the *Prince of the Power of the Air*, Eph. ii. 2. who, in the Days of *Tobit*, went under the Name of *Aſmodeus*, Chap. iii. 8. and is now by the *Jews* generally called *Sammael*, and by the *Chriſtians*, *Lucifer*.

THAT it was cuſtomary among the *Jews* to caſt out Devils, by the Invocation of the Name of the Moſt High, we may learn from *Juſtin Martyr*; who in his Dialogue with *Trypho*, tells him, that *if any* Jew *exorciſed a Devil, in the Name of the God of* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *perhaps, he would obey him*; as alſo from what *Irenæus* tells us, *viz.* that *by the Invocation of the Name of God, even before the Advent of our Lord, Men were ſaved from evil Spirits and all kind of Demons*; and from what *Origen (cont. Celſ.)* affirms, *viz.* that *the Name of the God of* Abraham, Iſaac, *and* Jacob, *being uſed by the* Jews, *in the Incantation of Devils, did great Miracles*: And, if this was a common Practice among the *Jews*, then will the Force of our Saviour's Argument be this,——"You "make no doubt, but that your Exorciſts, who "uſe the Name of God, do eject Devils by Virtue "of that Name; and how partial is it then in you, "to paſs an unjuſt Cenſure upon me, in whom you "ſee far greater Evidences of the Finger of God, "in my caſting out all manner of evil Spirits, and "healing all kinds of Diſeaſes."

BUT how can our Saviour be ſaid to have continued as long in the Grave, as *Jonah* did in the Whale's Belly, when there were no more than two Nights and one whole Day, between his Death and his Reſurrection? Now, for a Reſolution of this, we muſt obſerve, *firſt*, That the *Hebrews* began their Computation of a natural Day from the Even-

ing,

ing, or Night preceding; ſo that, from one Sun-ſet to another Sun-ſet, they reckoned a compleat Day, even as *Moſes* does, when he ſays, *The Evening and the Morning were the firſt Day*, Gen. i. 5. 2*dly*, That it is a common Thing with them, as well as other Nations, to put Part of a Day for the Whole, ſo that, whatever is done in any Part of the Day, is properly enough ſaid to be done on that Day: And 3*dly*, That they uſually reckon that to be done in ſo many Days, or ſo many Days and Nights, which begins in any Part of the firſt, and ends in any Part of the laſt Day. Now allowing this manner of Computation, and reckoning that the firſt Day began on *Thurſday* at Sun-ſet, and ended upon *Friday* at Sun-ſet; ſince our Saviour died on *Friday*, about three in the Afternoon, by putting a Part for the Whole, here we have one Day. *Saturday* is allowed on all Hands to be another; and, ſince the third Day began on *Saturday* at Sun-ſet, and our Saviour roſe on the Morning following, that Part of the Day being likewiſe put for the Whole, is fairly computed for the third. The *Hebrew* Child, according to Law, was to be circumciſed the eighth Day, but then the Day of its Birth, and of its Circumciſion were both counted; and, in like manner, if we reckon the Day on which *Chriſt* died, for one, and that on which he roſe, for another, including withal the Night belonging to the former, we may properly enough ſay, that, in Imitation of the Prophet *Jonah*, *he was three Days and three Nights in the Heart of the Earth.*

THE City *Nineveh* is generally ſuppoſed to have been built by *Nimrod*, was ſituate upon the River *Tigris*, and famous once for being the Metropolis of the firſt, *i. e.* the *Aſſyrian* Empire.

SHEBA, or *Saba*, is a Province of *Arabia Fœlix*, lying on the South of *Judea*, and on the extream Part of the Continent, and, being bounded by the Ocean,

Ocean, is therefore ſaid to be the utmoſt Part of the Earth.

OUR Saviour's Expreſſion, *ſhall riſe up in Judgment*, is ſpoken in Alluſion to a Cuſtom among the *Jews* and *Romans*, which was, for the Witneſſes to riſe from their Seats, when they accuſed Criminals, or gave any Evidence againſt them.

SINCE God had promiſed *Solomon*, that, as there was *none like him before him*, ſo after him *none ſhall ariſe like him* for Wiſdom, 1 *Kings* iii. 12. our Saviour's declaring, that in this Reſpect he was *greater than* Solomon, muſt be plainly avowing himſelf to be more than Man.

THE Words in the Text are, *His Mother and his Brethren*, Matt. xii. 46. but as the Word *Brethren* (according to the Language of the *Jews*, Gen. xxix. 12. *Levit.* x. 4.) is of great Latitude, theſe Brethren are ſuppoſed to be either *Joſeph*'s Sons by a former Wife, and ſo our Saviour's Brothers-in-Law, or the Children of *Mary*, the Wife of *Cleophas*, and ſo his Couſin-germans. There is indeed a Tradition in the Church, that before his eſpouſing the Virgin *Mary*, *Joſeph* had another Wife, whoſe Name was *Iſcha*, by whom he had ſix Children, four Sons, *James*, *Joſeph*, *Simon*, and *Jude*, and two Daughters, whoſe Names, ſome ſay, were *Eſther* and *Thamar*, others, *Mary* and *Salome*. But whoever compares *Matt.* xiii. 55. and xxvii. 56. *Mark* xv. 40. *John* xix. 25. together, will find, that the four Perſons, there ſaid to be our Saviour's Brethren, were the Sons of *Mary* the Wife of *Cleophas* or *Alpheus*, for the Name is all one, and Siſter to the Bleſſed Virgin; and ſo theſe Brethren of his (as we ſaid) were no more than his Couſin-germans. Others, however, ſtrenuouſly maintain the former Opinion, *viz.* that *Mary*, the Mother of *Jeſus*, was their Mother, *i. e.* their Step-Mother, and they conſequently his Brothers-in-law; and that, 1ſt, Becauſe this Opinion retains the proper Signification of the Word

Brethren, in which the *Jews* always ſeem to uſe it, when they ſpeak of our Lord's Brethren and Siſters; and 2dly, Becauſe it agrees with the Senſe of Antiquity, which, ever before St. *Jerom*'s Time (ſays the learned *Pearſon*) looked upon them as the Brethren of our Lord, who lived with his Mother, and are therefore ſo frequently found together, *Matt.* xii. 46. *John* ii. 12.

WHO are my Mother and Brethren, &c. We have another Speech of our Saviour's, much more of the ſame Import with this. For when a certain Woman in the Company, upon hearing his excellent Doctrine, broke out into this Exclamation, *Bleſſed is the Woman that bare thee, and the Paps which thou haſt ſucked*, his Reply is, *Yea, rather bleſſed are they that hear the Word of God, and keep it*, Luke xi. 27, 28. *For whoſoever ſhall do the Will of my Father, who is in Heaven, the ſame is my Brother, and Siſter, and Mother*, Matt. xii. 50. which Texts do not derogate any Thing from the Honour truely due to the bleſſed Virgin, as the Mother of the *Meſſiah*, but only ſhew the Folly of ſome, who exalt her above *Chriſt*, whom *Chriſt* conſidered only as his Mother, and ſeems here to ſet beneath every true Believer; though, conſidered as a Believer likewiſe, ſhe has a juſt Title to Pre-eminence; and it is, *by that, ſhe is infinitely more happy than if ſhe had only been his Mother, according to the Fleſh.*

WHAT this Houſe-keeper, mentioned *Matt.* xiii. 52. was in his own Family, that ſhould every Miniſter of the Goſpel be in the Church of *Chriſt*. He ſhould be thoroughly inſtructed in the Word of God, and capable of amaſſing a plentiful Proviſion of all Knowledge ſacred and profane. Above all, he ſhould be a perfect Maſter of the Law and the Prophets, acquainted with all Senſes, and capable to penetrate into their Myſteries: to know, more eſpecially, wherein the Goſpel, which *Chriſt* came to preach, differs from the Law given by *Moſes*, and to

to ſhew the Accompliſhment of the one, in the Publication of the other. For this was required, even in the *Levitical* Diſpenſation, that the *Prieſts Lips ſhould preſerve Knowledge*, that the People, *who ſought the Law at their Mouths*, might not be diſappointed, *Mal.* ii. 7.

LET us now go on with our Narrative.

HE had not continued long in the City *Capernaum*, before he reſolved to croſs the Lake, or Sea of *Galilee*, and to that Purpoſe had ordered his Diſciples to prepare a Veſſel for him, wherever he went: But juſt as he was going on Board, a certain *Scribe* came and offered to attend him wherever he went; but when he underſtood that no temporal Emolument was to be obtained by ſuch Attendance, he very probably retracted. A Diſciple of his own, at the ſame Time, deſired Leave to bury his Father, before he went along with him, but he commanded him to follow and to leave ſuch Offices to the Children of this World; and, when another was for taking Leave of his Family, and diſpoſing of his Effects, before he went, our Saviour let him know, *That whoever laid his Hand on the Plough, and looked back, was not fit for the Kingdom of God.*

TO put the Hand to the Plough, is a proverbial Saying, not only among the *Greeks* and *Hebrews*, but among other Nations, aud denotes in general the Beginning of any Enterprize. This our Saviour applies to ſpiritual Huſbandry; and thereby gives us to underſtand, that as he who undertakes to plow, ſhould not look behind him, for fear of making his Furrow crooked or unequal; ſo he that engages in the Miniſtry of the Goſpel; ſhould not ſuffer himſelf to be encumbered with much ſerving about other Matters, but in the Language of the *Apoſtle*, *forgetting thoſe Things that are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe Things which are before, preſs toward the Mark, for the Prize of the high Calling of* Jeſus Chriſt, *Phil.* iii. 13, 14.

WHILE the Ship was under Sail, and Jeſus aſleep in the Stern, there aroſe a moſt terrible Storm, ſo violent and impetuous, that the whole Ship was almoſt ſwallowed up by the Waves. Hereupon his Diſciples, in great Conſternation, awoke him; and when he aroſe, at his rebuking the Waves, they obeyed his Command, and immediately compoſed themſelves into a profound Calm, to the no ſmall Aſtoniſhment of every one that ſaw it.

THE next Morning, as our Lord landed on the *Eaſt* Side of the Lake, in that Part of the Province of *Trachonitis*, which is called the Country of the *Gadarens*, two Demoniacs, moſt grievouſly diſtracted, with ſome poor Rags about them, came running towards him. Hideous Spectacles were they both; but one much fiercer than the other, made diſmal Outcries, both Day and Night, and cut his Fleſh with ſharp Stones; and though he had been often bound with Fetters and Chains, yet he as often broke them to Pieces (ranging, with his Companion) among the Rocks and Tombs, and ſo very furious and outragious, that no Traveller durſt paſs that Way. Upon their Approach to *Jeſus*, the Devils (who ſpake by their Mouths) declaring him to be the Son of God, and expreſſed their Fear of his being come to *torment them before their Time.* They acknowledged their Number to be vaſtly great; and (if he caſt them out of the poſſeſſed Perſon) implored of him to ſuffer them to enter into the Herd of Swine, that was feeding on the Mountains not far off. Accordingly he permitted them; whereupon the whole Herd, to the Number of two Thouſand, ran violently upon the Rocks, and caſting themſelves headlong into the Lake, were all drowned, and utterly loſt.

THE Keepers of the Swine fled in the utmoſt Fright, and reported this ſtrange Accident in the City *Gadara*, and the neighbouring Villages, which brought great Multitudes to the Place, where they found

found the Man (who had been the moſt furious of the two) ſitting at our Saviour's Feet, cloathed, and in his perfect Senſes. But, whether it was that they took amiſs the Deſtruction of the Swine, or thought themſelves unworthy of his divine Preſence, ſo it was, that they intreated our Lord to depart out of their Country, which accordingly he did; but, inſtead of permitting the Man (out of whom he had caſt the moſt Devils) to go along with him, as he deſired, he ordered him *to return to his Houſe and his Friends, and there to declare what wonderful Things the Lord had done for him.*

As ſoon as our Lord had repaſſed the Lake, and was returned to *Capernaum*, the People came flocking about him, as uſual; and while he was teaching them, one *Jairus*, a chief Ruler of the *Synagogue*, falling proſtrate at his Feet, humbly beſought him to come and cure his Daughter, who was at the Point of Death; not doubting, but that if he laid his Hands upon her, ſhe would inſtantly recover. The Forwardneſs of the Ruler's Faith claimed our Saviour's Compaſſion and Aſſiſtance; and therefore he immediately roſe and followed him: But as he was on the Way, and preſſed with great Throngs of People, a certain Woman, who had been diſeaſed with an unnatural Flux of Blood for twelve Years, and, in Hopes of a Cure, had in vain ſpent all her Eſtate upon Phyſicians, being now confident, that if ſhe could but come to touch the Hem of his Garment, ſhe ſhould be healed, preſſed forward; and having got a Touch of it privately (as ſhe thought) found herſelf perfectly ſound. But ſhe was not unknown to *Jeſus*, and therefore, when he perceived that *Virtue was gone out of him*, turned about in the Throng, and demanded who it was that had touched him? The poor Woman came trembling; and, falling down at his Feet, declared to all the Company, both the Cauſe and miraculous Effects of her touching him, which he was ſo far from blaming, that he commended

commended her Faith, and imputed her Cure to the wonderful Strength of it.

DURING this Tranſaction, the Delay proved fatal (as one might imagine) to *Jairus*; for a Meſſage was brought him that his Daughter was actually dead, and therefore there was no Occaſion to give *Jeſus* any farther Trouble; but our Saviour, who over-heard what the Meſſenger ſaid, bid the Father not fear, but only believe, and then he ſhould find the bleſſed Effects of his Faith in the Recovery of his Daughter; and with theſe Words approaching the Houſe, they found the Muſicians and Mourners already come, who were deploring her Death with melancholy Tones, and loud Lamentations, according to the Cuſtom of thoſe Times. When *Jeſus* entered the Houſe, he deſired them to ceaſe their funeral Ceremonies, becauſe, at that Time, there was no Occaſion for them; and ſo taking the Girl's Parents, with *Peter* and *James*, and *John*, into the Chamber with him, he approached the Bed where ſhe lay, and taking her by the Hand, commanded her to ariſe; at which powerful Word her Life was reſtored to her again, ſo that ſhe immediately roſe up, and walked round the Room, to the no ſmall Amazement of her Parents. At his Departure he ordered them to give her ſomething to eat, and left a ſtrict Charge with them, that they ſhould make the Miracle ſecret; but their Joy was too great to conceal, what in Gratitude, for ſo great a Mercy, they thought they were obliged to divulge.

WHAT might poſſibly be the Motive of the Scribe's offering to attend our Saviour, the Conjectures of Commentators have been different. Some think that he did it with a ſincere Deſire to become his Diſciple; others, with a Deſign to turn Spy upon him; ſome out of a Spirit of Vanity to diſtinguiſh himſelf by being a Retainer to a Maſter in ſo great Reputation among the People; and others, out of a Principle of Self-intereſt, that he might attain ſome

Poſt

Poſt of Honour and Advantage, upon our Lord's Advancement to his Kingdom. This, indeed, ſeems to be the moſt probable Ground of his Reſolution, and accordingly the Deſign of our Saviour's Anſwer is, to diſcourage him from being his Diſciple upon ſuch ſecular Views, *The Foxes have Holes, and the Birds of the Air have Neſts, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay his own Head*, Luke xi. 58. And therefore much leſs any Accommodation or Proſpect of Preferment for his Followers.

SOME are of Opinion, that the Diſciple who requeſted to bury his Father, was St. *Philip*, who was the firſt that adjoined himſelf to *Jeſus*, and that his Father was not actually dead, but only grown ſo very old, that he could not live long; and therefore the Purport of his Addreſs to *Chriſt* is, "That for the "ſmall Remainder of his Father's Life he might be "permitted to live with him, but that, after he had "paid his laſt Offices to him, he would not fail to "return again, and devote himſelf intirely to his Ser-"vice:" But others underſtand the Words in a literal Senſe.

THE Words in the Text, *Let the Dead bury the Dead*, Matt. viii. 22. is a Form of Speech common in all Sorts of *Authors*, when, in the ſame Place they uſe the ſame Word twice, though very frequently in different Senſes. Thus the *Pſalmiſt*, ſpeaking of God, ſays, *With the froward thou ſhalt ſhew thyſelf froward*, Pſal. xviii. 28. even as *Moſes* introduces God ſpeaking of himſelf, *If ye walk contrary to me, I will alſo walk contrary to you*, Lev. xxvi. 23, 24. where the Words *froward* and *contrary*, as they relate to God, denote the Puniſhments which he intended to bring upon the Obſtinate, and are the rather uſed, becauſe the ſame Words went before. And in like Manner, *Let the Dead bury the Dead, but follow thou me*, may ſignify, let others bury the Dead, thou haſt Work of more Conſequence to do. It muſt not be diſſembled however, that by the Dead, both ſacred

and

and profane Authors do frequently mean, not only those, who in a natural Sense are so, by being alienated from the Life of God, and dead in Trespasses and Sins. Thus *Clemens* of *Alexandria* tells us, that *the Philosophers of the* Barbarians *called those* dead, *who deserted their Doctrines, and subjected their Minds to sensual Pleasures*, which *Philo* calls *the Death of the Soul, entombed in Passions and all Manner of Wickedness*. And therefore the full Import of our Saviour's Words must be, *Let these, who are unconcerned for the Things of God, and unfit to engage in promoting them, perform such Offices, which they can do, as well as others; but thou, who hast begun to follow me, and to attend upon the Kingdom of God, go on with Resolution, and without allowing thyself any Avocation from that Work:* Hereby teaching us, that they, who are called to the Preaching of the Gospel, and the Salvation of Souls, should not suffer any earthly Business, which may be done as well by others, who are unfit to be employed in Spirituals, to give them the least Impediment or Molestation.

THE Country *Trachonitis*, which is so called by the *Greeks* from its rough and craggy Mountains, together with *Ituræa*, made, in our Saviour's Time, one Tetrarchy, *i. e.* one fourth Part, or rather Division (for they were not equal Parts) of the Kingdom of *Herod the Great*, when he died. It was antiently called *Argob*, Deut. iii. 13. and according to the best Account, is bounded on the *East* by *Arabia Deserta*, to the *West* by *Batanæa*, to the *South* by *Iturea*, and to the *North* by the Country of *Damascus*. And as it was a Province full of rocky Hills, which served for an Harbour to a great Number of Thieves and Robbers, it often found Employment for *Herod the Great*, as we may see in the History of *Josephus*.

THE Country of the *Gadarens*, in St. *Matthew*, is called the Country of the *Gargasens*, because it lay in the Neighbourhood of the two Cities *Gadara* and *Gargesa*,

Gargeſa, which were both ſituate in the Diſtrict of *Decapolis*. *Gadara*, which took its Name from the Tribe of *Gad*, to whom it fell by Lot in the Diviſion of the Land, was a famous City beyond *Jordan*, the Capital of *Paræa*, and ſtood Eaſtward of the Sea of *Tiberias*, about ſixty Furlongs from the Shore. *Gargeſa* was a Place of ſome Importance likewiſe, according to Hiſtorians; and the near Adjacency of theſe two Towns made the *Evangeliſts* call the Country that lay between them, ſometimes by one Name, and ſometimes by another.

THERE is ſome Difference between the *Evangeliſts* in their Account of the Cure of the Demoniacks: For, whereas St. *Mark*, Chap. v. 2. and St. *Luke*, Ch. viii. 27. take Notice only of one Demoniack; St. *Matthew*, Chap. vii. 28. makes Mention of two. Now, to reconcile this ſeeming Difference, Dr. *Lightfoot* ingeniouſly conjectures, that one of theſe two was a *Gargeſen* and a *Jew*, and ſo, in caſting the Devil out of him, our Lord did no more than what he had frequently done in *Judea*, but the other a *Gadaren*, *i. e.* one of an heathen City, as *Joſephus* teſtifies, for which Reaſon St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* take chiefly Notice of him, as a more remarkable Inſtance, becauſe he, and the *Syrophœnician* Woman were the only two Heathens, that we read of, our Saviour cured. But there is a farther Reaſon for the *Evangeliſt*'s taking Notice of one rather than the other; and that is, That the one, in his Behaviour, was more remarkable than the other; was poſſeſſed with an unclean Spirit, called himſelf *Legion*, and could not be bound with Fetters or Chains; went about naked, and cutting himſelf with Stones; and when he was cured, diſtinguiſhed himſelf by deſiring to follow *Chriſt*: Circumſtances all, which St. *Matthew* omits, but St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* have particularly related, and upon theſe Accounts, might very likely think, that he fell more properly under their Conſideration, than the other.

THE Tombs which the *Evangeliſts* here mention, are ſaid to be in the Mountains, and in the Wilderneſs: For the Cuſtom of the *Jews* was to have their Tombs, like ſo many little Cells cut out in the Sides of Caverns, and hollow Parts of Rocks and Mountains, at ſome Diſtance from their Towns, and uſually in very lonely and deſart Places; into which it was uſual for the Devils to compel thoſe whom they poſſeſſed, in order to confirm Men in the vain Perſuaſion that the Souls of thoſe that died in any Crime, were after Death turned into Devils.

ST. *JEROM*, upon the Devil's Queſtion to our Saviour, is apt to imagine, that as Slaves, who have a long while run from their Maſter, no ſooner ſee his Face, but they bethink themſelves of the Puniſhment which they have deſerved; ſo the Devils, finding our Saviour upon Earth, thought, at firſt Sight, that he was come to judge and condemn them, and therefore they aſk, *Art thou come hither to torment us before our Time?* i. e. before the Time of the laſt Judgment, when they expect no more than to be eternally puniſhed, or (as the Scripture expreſſes it) *to be caſt into the Lake of Fire and Brimſtone for ever.*

ONE Reaſon, as ſome imagine, why this Man deſired to be with *Chriſt*, was his Fear leſt the Devil, at his Departure, ſhould ſeize upon him again: and it was partly to avoid the Suſpicion of vain Glory, wherefore our Lord might have given ſome Umbrage, had he carried about with him, all thoſe upon whom his greateſt Miracles were wrought, and partly to ſhew, that in his Abſence he was able to protect ſuch as believe and truſt in him, from the Malice of evil Spirits, that he would not accept of his Company.

SOME learned Men are of Opinion, that *Jairus*, the Ruler of the *Synagogue*, was the Preſident of the Conſiſtory of the Twenty-three Judges which were appointed in every City, to puniſh ſuch Offences as were

were not capital; but it is more generally thought, that he was not a civil Magiſtrate, but a leading Man in the *Synagogue* of *Capernaum*, who had, in a great Meaſure, under his Direction ſuch Things as related to the Service of God. We are to obſerve, however, that the Word *Archiſynagogos* is ſometimes taken in a ſtrict Senſe for the Perſon who was the Preſident, the Head and Maſter of the *Synagogue*, who, according to this Acceptation, was but one; and at other Times, in a larger Senſe, ſo as to comprehend the Preſbyters and Elders likewiſe, in which Acceptation, the Rulers of the *Synagogue* were more than one. How many they were, is no where declared, becauſe that depended upon the Largeneſs of the City, and Number of thoſe who frequented the Place of divine Worſhip: only we may obſerve, that *Jairus* was not the chief Preſident, becauſe he is called *one* of the *Rulers of the Synagogue*, Mark v. 22.

EUSEBIUS tells us for a Certainty, that the Woman with a Bloody-flux was a *Gentile*, living in *Paneas*, or *Cæſarea Philippi*, a Town ſituate near the Head of the River *Jordan*, and upon the Report of others, relates this Story. *That by the Gate of this Woman's Houſe, was erected a Braſs Statue, bearing the Effigies of a Woman upon her Knees, in the Poſture of a Suppliant; that oppoſite to her, there ſtood the Effigies of a Man in Braſs, reſembling our Saviour, ſtretching out his Hand to the Woman; that at the Feet of this Statue, an unknown Plant ſprung up, which reaching to the Borders of his Garment, became a preſent Remedy againſt all Manner of Diſeaſes; and that theſe Statues were ſtanding even unto the Time of the Emperor* Maximinus, *who took them away from this City.* But (not to inſiſt on the many Exceptions that might be made to this Story, which favours much of the Superſtition of later Times,) how a Woman, who, as all the *Evangeliſts* inform us, had ſpent all that ſhe had, ſhould be able to erect two ſuch coſtly

Statues, or how the *Jews*, in all their Wars, or the *Gentiles*, who were both bitter Enemies to *Chriſtianity* ſhould ſuffer ſuch a Confirmation of it to remain ſo long, we can by no Means imagine.

HENCE it is evident, that the Virtue whereby our Saviour did theſe miraculous Cures, was not communicated to him, but reſided in him, and conſequently proves that he was God. For the Virtue whereby the Prophets and Apoſtles did their Cures, is aſcribed to God; as when it is ſaid, that *God did ſpecial Miracles by the Hand of* Paul, *Acts* xix. 11. But the Miracles done by *Chriſt*, are imputed to the *Virtue, which went out of him, and healed all that ſought to touch him*, Luke vi. 19. *The Virtues going out of him*, however, is a Vulgar Expreſſion, which muſt not be taken in its literal Senſe, as if it were a Quality diſtinct from the Perſon of *Chriſt*, and what might paſs from him to another; becauſe the divine Power reſiding in him, was incapable of any Alienation or Diminution, be the Cures he performed never ſo many, or never ſo miraculous; and therefore the only Meaning of the Expreſſion muſt be, that it went out, with Regard to us, or according to our Conception and Apprehenſion of Things, when it diſcovered and manifeſted itſelf in the Cure of ſome Diſeaſe, or any outward Effects.

OUR Saviour's Diſciples, we find, admired at his aſking this Queſtion, *Luke* v. 31. but the Reaſon for his doing ſo, we may ſuppoſe, was to diſcover to the People the Greatneſs of the Miracle, which, without this Examination, might have gone off without being known; to ſhew them the Strength and Virtue of the Woman's Faith and Confidence in his Power; and thence to convince *Jairus*, who began a little to ſtagger in his Faith, that he was able to revive his Daughter, even though ſhe was dead, if he did but believe.

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IN all the Books of the *Old Teſtament*, there is not the leaſt Hint given us of any muſical Inſtruments, employed in Funerals. We read, indeed, a good deal of mourning for the Dead, of Mourners hired on purpoſe, and of the diſmal Ditties, which theſe People ſung, to excite Sorrow in others: But the Uſe of Muſick was reckoned an incongruous Thing, and no ways comporting with the Solemnity of this ſad Seaſon. Among Heathen Authors there is frequent Mention made of it, as a Thing long in Uſe, both with the *Greeks* and *Romans*; and therefore we may preſume, that from theſe Nations it was, that the *Jews* borrowed and adopted it into their Funeral Ceremonies. That among them it was in Uſe in our Saviour's Time, at leaſt among Perſons of the better Rank, is plain from the Paſſage now before us, that it was an eſtabliſhed Cuſtom in the Time of *Joſephus*, is evident from his own Teſtimony; and that it grew into a Kind of ſuperſtitious Uſe, in the Times following, is evident from what the *Rabbins* enjoin, *viz.* that none, even of the meaner Sort, ſhould, at the Funeral of a Wife, have fewer than two Flutes, beſides the Voices of old Women, who, by their ſad Modulation, were to extort Lamentation from others.

THE Reaſon which our Saviour gives for his deſiring them to ceaſe their funeral Ceremonies, is, that *the Maid is not dead, but aſleep*, Luke viii. 52. Now, in ſeveral Places of the *New Teſtament* eſpecially, Death is called a Sleep, *John* xi. 11. *Acts* vii. 60. 1 *Cor.* xv. 6, *&c.* and therefore our Saviour only makes uſe of this Word of a ſofter Signification, not ſo much with a Deſign to impoſe upon thoſe to whom he had directed his Speech, as to teſtify his Humility and great *Modeſty*, in his Deſire to conceal his divine Power. The Perſons he ſpoke to, were certainly thoſe who were preparing for her Interment, and performing the Funeral Rites belonging to it; and therefore he only intimates, that ſhe

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was not dead, as they accounted her, *i. e.* not to come to Life again before the Reſurrection; but that her Death was no more than what he could remove, with the ſame Facility, another as might be awakened out of Sleep.

LET us now explain ſome Things in this Period of the Hiſtory. Returning from the Houſe of *Jairus*, our Lord was followed in the Streets by two blind Men, imploring his Aid, who, as ſoon as he had entered the Houſe, came after him, and when he had cured them, were diſmiſſed with a ſtrict Charge to conceal the Miracle, which out of the Abundance of their Joy they could not do. And, no ſooner were the blind Men gone, but the People brought to him a dumb Man, poſſeſſed with a Devil, which when he had caſt out, the Perſon immediately recovered his Speech, to the great Aſtoniſhment of the Multitude, who unanimouſly acknowledged, that the like had *never been ſeen in* Iſrael; only the *Phariſees* perſiſted in their old Malice, and inſinuated to the People (as formerly) *that he ejected Devils, by the Help of ſome ſupreme Devil*, who had the reſt under his Controul, and with whom he was confederate.

AFTER a ſhort Stay at *Capernaum*, our Lord departed, with his Diſciples, into ſome other Parts of *Galilee*. About a Year before he had been barbarouſly treated by the Inhabitants of *Nazareth*, the Place of his Education; and yet, notwithſtanding this, he was reſolved once more to make them a freſh Tender of Mercy. To this Purpoſe he went into their *Synagogue* on the Sabbath-day, and taught the People; but inſtead of being converted to the Faith, though they were aſtoniſhed at his Abilities, they were ſcandalizing his Perſon, and began to upbraid him with the Meanneſs of his Parentage and Employment, as they had done before; inſomuch that being ſenſible, that a *Prophet never wanted Honour, but in his own Country*, he did not abide with them long, nor did he work any Miracles there

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UPON his Departure from *Nazareth*, he viſited moſt of the Cities and Villages of *Galilee*, teaching in the *Synagogues*, preaching the Goſpel, and curing all Kinds of Diſeaſes among the People; and as he obſerved, one Day, the numerous Throngs and Multitudes that reſorted to him, he looked upon them with an Eye of Pity and Compaſſion, as ſo many Sheep diſperſed and deſtitute of Shepherds, and from thence formed a Reſolution to ſend out his twelve *Apoſtles* (by two and two together) into the more diſtant Parts of *Judea*, whilſt himſelf continued preaching in *Galilee*, and the Places adjacent.

To this Purpoſe, he inveſted them with a full Power to cure all Diſeaſes, eject Devils, and even raiſe the Dead. He gave them Inſtructions in what Manner they were to behave in the Places whither they went: but forbad them, at the ſame Time, to addreſs themſelves to any of the *Gentiles* or *Samaritans*, but only *to the loſt Sheep of the Houſe of* Iſrael, *Matt.* x. 16. He told them the Conſequence of their Miniſtry, which (after his Death more eſpecially) inſtead of intitling them to temporal Advantages, would expoſe them to ſundry Kinds of Perſecutions; but for their Encouragement, he acquainted them, that thoſe who rejected their Meſſage, ſhould be treated with Severity at leaſt at the righteous Judgment of God: whereas thoſe that received them kindly, and gave, were it but a *Cup of cold Water*, to the leaſt of his Diſciples, for their Maſter's Sake, *ſhould in no wiſe miſs of his Reward.*

WITH this Commiſſion the Apoſtles went into all Parts of *Paleſtine*, where the *Jews* inhabited, preaching the Goſpel and the Doctrine of Repentance, as Part of it, working Miracles for its Confirmation, and anointing the Sick for a Token of their Recovery, whilſt our Lord continued the Courſe of his Miniſtry in *Galilee*. It was now about a

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Year ſince *Herod Antipas* had committed *John the Baptiſt* cloſe Priſoner to the Caſtle *Machærus*, and upon the Return of his Birth-day, having made a ſplendid Entertainment for the Lords and chief Officers of his Dominions, he was infinitely pleaſed with the Dancing of a young Lady, Daughter to his unlawful Wife, *Herodias*; inſomuch, that in the Height of his Mirth and Jollity, he promiſed (with the Addition of an Oath) to grant her whatever ſhe demanded, though it amounted to Half of his Dominions. Unwilling to loſe ſo fair an Opportunity, ſhe immediately conſulted with her Mother what Favour to aſk, who being prompted by the Height of her Malice and Revenge, named the Head of *John the Baptiſt* to be given her, which the Daughter accordingly demanded of the King, in the Preſence of the whole Aſſembly.

THIS ſtrange Requeſt, at firſt cauſed an exceeding Damp upon the King's Spirits; but having recovered himſelf (out of a pretended Reverence to his Oath, and Reſpect to his Nobility, then preſent) he ſent an Executioner, who beheaded *John*, and brought his Head in a Charger to the young Lady, which ſhe preſented to the Mother; but, as for his Body, his Diſciples, when they came to hear of his Death, took care to bury it, and to bring to *Jeſus* the News of the tragical Fate that had befallen their Maſter.

THE following Obſervations will explain what may ſeem difficult in the foregoing Narration.

THE *Greek* Word we tranſlate Carpenter, is of general Signification, and denotes any Worker, either in Wood, Metal, or Stone; but the Tradition of the Church has all along been, that our bleſſed Saviour was what our Tranſlation has ſpecified, a Carpenter; and *Juſtin Martyr* aſſures us, that he made Plows and Yokes, which at that Time were the Carpenter's Buſineſs. However this be, it is certain, that by the *Jewiſh* Canons, all Parents were bound to

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teach their Children ſome Trade; that their moſt celebrated *Rabbins* thought it a great Reproach not to be of ſome Profeſſion; and that there was a peculiar Reaſon why our Saviour ſhould be of one, and that no very liberal one neither, even to take off all Suſpicion of his being bred up in curious Arts, which his Enemies at all Times were forward enough to ſay, notwithſtanding the Diſadvantages of his Education.

AMONG all the Accounts which the Heathens have given us of their famous Magicians and Workers of Wonders, there are none to be found, who pretended to a Power to delegate their Virute to others, or to impart their Power to them, upon the Invocation of their Names, or Belief of their Doctrine. Hence *Arnobius* having ſummed up the Miracles which our Saviour did, adds, That he *not only did them by his Power, but permitted many others to do them by Invocation of his Name; nor did he any peculiar and aſtoniſhing Miracles himſelf, that he did not enable his* little one's, *and even Ruſticks to perform:* Whereupon he aſks thoſe he writes to, *Did ever that* Jupiter, *whom the* Romans *worſhip in their Capital, give the like Power to any Mortal!* And then concludes this to be a Demonſtration of a truly divine Power: *For to transfer your miraculous Power to a Man, and to give Authority and Strength to a Creature to do that, which you alone can do, is an infallible Evidence of one that hath Power over all, and the Cauſes of all Things at his Beck.*

HE calls all *Iſrael* Sheep, though they were not obedient to the Voice of their Shepherds, as not being all choſen People. He calls them loſt Sheep, becauſe they were in great Danger of being loſt and ruined by the Ignorance and Wickedneſs of their Guides; and to them the Apoſtles were ſent, becauſe they were the *Children of the Kingdom*, Matt. viii. 12. to whom the Promiſe of the *Meſſiah* was made, *Gen.* xvii. 1. and *of whom concerning the Fleſh he came*,

Rom. ix. 5. and therefore it was the divine Will that they ſhould be firſt honoured with the Preaching of the Goſpel who alone enjoyed the Miniſtry of *Jeſus Chriſt* and his Diſciples, while he continued upon Earth: But upon their rejecting of ſo great Salvation, the Apoſtle's Commiſſion was enlarged. For *it was neceſſary* (ſays St. *Paul* to the *Jews*) that *the Word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you, but ſeeing you put it from you, and judge yourſelves unworthy of everlaſting Life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles*, Acts xiii. 46.

THAT it was uſual with the *Jews* to preſcribe Oil as a proper Thing to anoint the Sick, in order to their Recovery, Dr. *Lightfoot*, upon *Mark* vi. 13. has fully proved; nor can we think that the Apoſtles having no Command from *Chriſt* to do ſo, would have uſed this Ceremony, had it not been cuſtomary among their Countrymen: But whether they did it ſymbolically, in Hopes of obtaining to the Patient the Oil of Gladneſs, or only medicinally; it is certain that the Virtue which attended it, when uſed by the Apoſtles, could not be natural, and inherit in the Oil, but muſt be ſupernatural, and derived from him who ſent them, becauſe this Unction always produced a certain and conſtant Cure in thoſe that were anointed.

BOTH the City and Fort which were called by the Name of *Machærus*, were ſituated beyond *Jordan*, about two Leagues from that River, on the *North-eaſt* Side of the Lake *Aſphaltites*, or *Dead-Sea*, and not far diſtant from the Place where that River diſcharges itſelf into it. It was in the Hands of *Aretas*, King of *Arabia*, when he married his Daughter to *Herod Antipas*, but how it afterwards came into *Herod*'s Poſſeſſion (as it certainly was, when he beheaded *John the Baptiſt*) we have no Account from Hiſtory.

THAT it was an uſual Cuſtom with Kings to celebrate the Day of their Birth, and that of their

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Acceſſion to the Throne, (for the Word may be applied to either) with great Solemnity, we have an Example as old as *Pharaoh*, Gen. xl. 20. nor need we doubt, but that, on ſuch joyful Occaſioas, there were Muſick and Dancing, and all Manner of Diverſions to entertain the Company: But that Perſons of the firſt Rank and Diſtinction ſhould act any Part in theſe Diverſions, was a rare and unwonted Thing; and therefore St. *Chryſoſtom* is of Opinion, that *Herodias*, foreſeeing what would happen, forced this young Lady upon a Thing which would better become an Actreſs upon the Stage.

THIS *Herodias*, (as *Joſephus* relates the Matter) *in Contempt of the Laws of her Country, married again to* Herod, *the natural Brother of her Huſband, ſeparating herſelf from him, whilſt living, although he had a Child by her*; ſo that being guilty both of Inceſt and Adultery, ſhe might well be called his unlawful Wife.

IT may not be improper here, to take Notice of the remarkable Providence of God, in avenging the Death of this righteous Man upon *Herod*, *Herodias*, and her Daughter. 1ſt, As the War between *Herod*, and *Aretas* King of *Arabia*, was occaſioned by *Herod*'s wicked Contract with *Herodias* to eject his Daughter, who was his lawful Wife, and to marry her who was his Brother *Philip*'s; ſo *Joſephus* declares, that the *Jews* looked upon his putting *John* to Death, as the Cauſe of the Miſcarriage of his Army, *God being angry with him for the Death of* John the Baptiſt. 2dly, Envying the Glory of her Brother *Agrippa*, upon whom *Caligula* had conferred the Title of a King. *Herodias* prevailed with her Huſband to repair to *Rome*, in order to requeſt the like Favour of the Emperor; but the Emperor, having received a bad Impreſſion againſt him, inſtead of granting what he deſired, deprived him of his Government, and baniſhed both her and him to *Lyons* in *France*, where they lived inglorioufly, and died miſerably; and

this, according to *Joſephus*, *was done in Puniſhment of her Envy, and of his Readineſs to hearken to her Solicitations.* And 3dly, Of her Daughter it is related, that as ſhe was going over the Ice in Winter, the Ice brake and let her in up to the Head, which, upon the meeting of the Ice again, was ſevered from her Body. And this Story, if it be true, (as it is confidently told us by *Nicephorus*) is a wonderful Inſtance of God's avenging Providence.

HEROD was no more than a *Tetrarch*, or one of thoſe Four among whom his Father's Kingdom was divided; but St. *Mark*, Chap. vi. 14. gives him the Title of a King, as himſelf no doubt was fond enough of it, and perhaps, in the Provinces under his Dominion, was generally called by it. Why he came to be concerned at the young Lady's deſiring ſo ſtrange a Boon as that of the *Baptiſt*'s Head, is no Wonder. The very Mention of ſuch a Thing from ſuch a Perſon, and in ſuch an Aſſembly, was enough to ſhock any Man of leſs than uncommon Barbarity; but then the *Evangeliſt* informs us, that *Herod* had conceived a good Opinion of the *Baptiſt*, as a juſt and holy Man, and when he heard him (as he did it very gladly) in many Things he followed his Advice, *Mark* vi. 20. and not only ſo, but feared the Reſentment of the People likewiſe, (with whom he was in high Eſteem) when they ſhould come to be informed of the Cauſe and Circumſtance of his Death, *Matt.* xiv. 5. There might, however, be another Reaſon, leſs obſerved, for *Herod*'s Concern upon this Occaſion. It was now his Birth-day; and it was uſual even among heathen Princes, at ſuch a Time, to be gay and merry, to think of no ill Omens, to ſurceaſe all Contentions, and not ſo much as to deprive of Life, even condemned Criminals, on that Day, when the Sovereign of the Country received his, leſt they ſhould offend or ſadden the Genius that preſided over their Nativity: And therefore it is more than probable, that *Herod*, who

who was more than half a Pagan, might have the ſame Notion of the Thing. But, if he had not, it can hardly be thought, but that ſuch an Execution would damp the Joy of the Meeting, and procure him more Enemies among the thinking Part of the Company, than the Non-performance of a wicked and illegal Oath could have done.

THE *Greek* Word which we render *Executioner*, in the Hiſtory of the *Roman* Emperors, ſignifies a *Soldier of the Guard*, and among the *Jews*, *Romans*, *Chaldæans*, and *Egyptians*, it was cuſtomary for one of the King's Guard to be the Executioner of thoſe whom he had condemned to Death.

THUS died the great Fore-runner of our bleſſed Saviour, about two Years and three Months after his Entrance upon his publick Miniſtry, in the thirty-fifth Year of his Age, and was the firſt who ſuffered upon the Account of the Goſpel, though ſeldom called the firſt Martyr. *He was, indeed, a Man* (according to the Character which *Joſephus* gives of him) *endued with all Virtue, who exhorted the* Jews *to the Practice of Juſtice towards Men, and Piety towards God, and alſo to Baptiſm, which would become acceptable to God, if they renounced their Sins, and to the Clearneſs of their Bodies, added the Purity of Souls.*

WHEN *Herodias* had got the Baptiſt's Head in her Poſſeſſion, it is ſaid, that ſhe thruſt his Tongue through with her Bodkin; and for Fear that the Head, if buried with the Body, ſhould be re-united, and riſe again to diſturb her unlawful Luſt, and diſquiet *Herod*'s Conſcience, ſhe buried it in her own Palace; but where his Apoſtles buried his Body the *Evangeliſts* have not informed us, only we are told, that in the Time of *Julian* the Apoſtate, his Tomb was ſhewn at *Samaria*, where the Inhabitants of the Country opened it, and burnt Part of his Bones; but the reſt were ſaved by ſome Chriſtians, that carried them to one *Philip*, an Abbot of *Jeruſalem*, who

who preſented them to St. *Athanaſius*; but ſome Time after, when *Theodoſius* built a Church, in Honour of the *Baptiſt*, in the Place where the Temple of *Serapis* ſtood, *Ann. Dom.* 396, theſe holy Relicks were repoſited in it: Though what became of his Head we no where read, only the Abbot *Villeloin* tells us, in his Memoirs, that he ſaw one at *Amiens*; but this was the fifth or ſixth Head of the *Baptiſt*, that, in the Courſe of his Travels he had the Honour to kiſs.

LET us now reſume our Story. About the ſame Time that *Jeſus* was informed of *John*'s Death by his Diſciples, his own Apoſtles returned from their ſeveral Journies, and gave him an Account of all their Tranſactions. The Fame of the Miracles, which our Saviour, both by himſelf and his Apoſtles, had wrought, gave *Herod* ſome Umbrage, to think that the Perſon who did them, was *John*, whom he had unjuſtly murdered, and who now, very probably, was riſen from the Dead to revenge his Blood upon him; and therefore, knowing the Subtilty and Cruelty of that Prince, our Saviour ordered his Apoſtles to prepare a Veſſel, wherein he and they only, might croſs the Sea of *Galilee*, and retire for a little while from the Multitude, to a Deſart near *Bethſaida*. But in vain was it for him to think of concealing himſelf: The People ſeeing where he took ſhipping, ran after him on Foot by the Lake-ſide; and though they had a great Circuit of Land to take, were got into the *Deſart* almoſt as ſoon as he; which ſingular Inſtance of their Zeal ſo affected his Compaſſion, that, though he came to that Place for the Sake of Retirement, he could no longer withhold his Preſence from them; but, aſcending a Mountain, and taking his Diſciples with him, he there firſt inſtructed them in ſeveral Things concerning the Kingdom of God, and having afterwards cured their Sick and Diſeaſed, he, at laſt, fed them all, to the Number of five thouſand Men, beſides Women

and

and Children, with five Barley-loaves and two ſmall Fiſhes (having firſt invoked a Bleſſing upon them) and that with a Plenty ſo exuberant, that the very Fragments which remained filled twelve Baſkets.

THIS miraculous Multiplication made ſuch an Impreſſion upon the Multitude, that they no longer doubted of his being the *Meſſiah*, and were therefore reſolved to ſet him up for their King by main Force; but he, knowing the Miſchief of ſuch a Deſign, conſtrained his Diſciples (who were forward enough perhaps to join in the Thing) immediately to take Shipping, and to paſs by *Bethſaida* to *Capernaum*, whilſt himſelf diſmiſſed the Multitude; and (when he had ſo done) continued till after Midnight in Meditation and Prayer.

IN the mean time the Ship, where the Apoſtles were on Board, was toſſed with a great Storm in the Middle of the Lake. The Waves ran ſo high, and the Wind was ſo contrary, that, as ſoon as Morning appeared, they had not got much above a League on their Voyage, when our Saviour came walking on the Surface of the Sea, and drew near towards the Ship. This ſtrange Appearance (which they took for a Spirit) increaſed their Fear not a little. Our Lord indeed, to diſpel it, told them who he was; but *Peter*, ſtill doubtful, wanted a Demonſtration, which when he permitted him to try, and the Apoſtle, upon the Experiment, was ready to ſink, he graciouſly reached out his Hand, and, with a gentle Rebuke for the Weakneſs of his Faith, ſetting him again upon the Top of the Waves, walked along with him to the Veſſel; which they had no ſooner entered, but the Winds, knowing their Duty to their Sovereign, ceaſed. The reſt of the Diſciples obſerving, came and adored *Jeſus*, acknowledging his Omnipotence, and admiring the Divinity of his Power and Perſon; and as it was not long before the Ship gained the Port, great Numbers out of

the

the Country, as ſoon as they underſtood that he was arrived, brought their Sick and Deſeaſed on Beds, and laid them before him in the Streets, beſeeching him to permit them only to touch the Border *of his Garment, and as many as touched him were made whole.*

THE Multitudes, whom our Lord had miraculouſly fed in the *Deſart* near *Bethſaida*, were in Expectation of finding him the next Morning on the Mountain; for they had ſeen the Diſciples take Shipping without their Maſter, and no other Veſſel left for him: But, perceiving that he was gone as well as his Diſciples, and having an Opportunity of other Veſſels from *Tiberias*, they paſſed over with all Expedition to *Capernaum*, where they found him teaching in the Synagogues: And, being in no ſmall Surprize, deſired to know of him, *how he got thither?* But inſtead of gratifying their Curioſity with a direct Anſwer, he, who knew their corrupt Expectations, and they came after him, not ſo much for his miraculous Gifts, as the Gratification of their own Appetites, took Occaſion from thence to diſcourſe to them of a certain Food, different to what he had given them in the *Deſart* of *Bethſaida*, infinitely more deſerving of their Inquiſition, and whereof the *Manna* in the Wilderneſs was no more than a Figure or a Type. What this Fruit was he ſignified to them, *viz.* The Merits of his future Death and Paſſion, which alone could be available for the obtaining of eternal Life, to ſuch as believed in his divine Miſſion and Deſcent from Heaven.

BUT thoſe ſublime Truths, which, for the preſent, he thought proper to couch in Terms obſcure, and figurative enough, ſo gravelled the Intellects of his Auditory, that even his Diſciples began to murmur, and many of his Followers, miſtaking the Words in a *literal*, which he intended in a *ſpiritual* Senſe, and thence infering, that he was not ſuch a *Meſſiah* as they imagined, wholly deſerted him; inſomuch that

that he began to ſuſpect the Fidelity of his very *Apoſtles*, until *Peter* (in Behalf of all the reſt) declared their fixed Purpoſe of adhering to him, unto full Conviction, that he was the *Meſſiah* the Son of the living God. But notwithſtanding this liberal and frank Confeſſion, our Lord gave them to underſtand, that they were not all equally ſounded, for *among the Twelve, whom he had ſelected, one of them was to prove a Traitor*; meaning this of *Judas Iſcariot*, who juſtly deſerved that Name, becauſe he afterwards betrayed him.

WE ſhall now illuſtrate what we have related, with the following Obſervations.

SEVERAL of the antient *Jewiſh* Writers, as well as ſome modern Rabbins, are of Opinion, that the Souls of Men and Women, when they died, went into other Bodies, inſomuch that they imagine, that the Soul of *Moſes* was the ſame with that of *Abel*: and that of the *Egyptian* whom *Moſes* ſlew, the ſame with that of *Cain*: But, whether the *Jews* had this Notion of the *Tranſmigration of Souls* (as *Joſephus*, de Bell. lib. vii. cap. 25. and *Philo*, de Somniis, ſeem to tell us) it can hardly be thought, that what *Herod* here ſays, in regard to our Saviour, was ſpoken in Alluſion to it, becauſe it was not conceivable, how the Soul of *John*, lately dead, could enter into the Body of *Chriſt*, which, for thirty Years and upwards, had been informed by another Soul. And therefore his Words muſt be underſtood, not of the *Tranſition* of the *Baptiſt*'s Soul but of his *Reviviſcence*, or returning to Life again. For, as it was an Opinion among the *Jews*, that, at the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, ſome of their Prophets would riſe from the Dead; *Herod* had ſome Reaſon to ſuppoſe, that *John*, whom all the *Jews* held to be a Prophet, might be permitted to return into the World, and perhaps, to avenge his Death upon the Tyrant.

THE *Evangeliſts* make uſe of two Words upon the Occaſion of *Chriſt*'s feeding the Multitude; *Bleſſing*, and *giving of Thanks*; and, by the former of thoſe ſome Interpreters underſtand the multiplying Virtue, when he then commanded down upon the Subſtance, that he was going to give the People, and its marvellous Increaſe in the Hand of the Diſtributors, whereby it became a Repaſt ſufficient for ſo large a Multitude: Though others think, that he did no more than what we call *ſaying Grace*, *i. e.* thanked God for his bountiful Proviſion of all Things and begged his Bleſſing upon what he was going to diſpenſe among the People, that it might tend to the wholſome Nouriſhment of their Bodies. However this be, 'tis enough to warrant the indifferent Uſe of theſe two Words, that the Forms of Addreſs to Almighty God, upon the Uſe of his Gifts for a Refreſhment, have uſually been of a mixed Nature, and conſiſting partly of Praiſes and partly of Petitions, becauſe the End of ſuch Devotions is manifeſtly twofold, *viz.* to tender to Acknowledgements to God for his Liberality, and then to beg of him, that the good Creatures which he hath given us, may be ſanctified to our Uſe.

IN this Miracle, which could not be done without a creating Power, our Lord not only ſhewed himſelf to *be God bleſſed for ever more*, but took from the unbelieving *Jews* all Manner of Cavil, and Exception to his Works. For though Devils might, by Compact, give Place to one another, and ſome Exorciſts of their own might poſſibly caſt them out; yet none ever pretended to multiply Bread and Fiſh to ſuch a Proportion, that ſo ſmall a Quantity of either ſhould feed ſuch a Number, and then leave ſo great a Remainder.

IT was a ſufficient Reaſon for our Saviour's ordering the Fragments to be gathered up, and put in Baſkets, that, from them might appear both the Reality of the Miracle, and the exceeding Greatneſs

of

of the Increaſe; but becauſe our Lord aſſigns anothey by ſaying, *Gather up the Fragments, that nothing be loſt*, he hath herein ſhewed us, that all Reſerving for the future is not unlawful; that Charity is very conſiſtent with Frugality; indeed, not only that they may, but that they ſhould, go together; for God will be ſure to make a mighty Difference between the Virtue, and the ſpecious Extream beyond it; between the liberal and laviſh Man.

ST. *Mark* tells us that our Saviour ordered his Apoſtles to croſs the Sea, and to wait for him on the other Side, at *Bethſaida*, Chap. vi. 45. St. *John* writes, that accordingly they entered into the Ship, but, inſtead of going where they were directed, they ſteered their Courſe towards *Capernaum*, Chap. vi. 17. and yet, after all, if we will believe St. *Matthew*, they landed at laſt, neither at *Bethſaida* nor *Capernaum*, but in the Country of *Genneſaret*, Chap. xiv. 34. Now to reconcile this, we need only remember what all the *Evangeliſts* tell us, *viz.* that while the Apoſtles were on board, there aroſe a ſtrong Gale of Wind, which blowing from the *North*, proved in a manner, quite contrary to them, ſo that, inſtead of making the Part of *Bethſaida*, which is on the *North* Coaſt of the Sea of *Galilee*, the next Morning they found themſelves on the oppoſite Side, not far from *Tiberias*, and to the *South* of *Capernaum*. Though therefore our Saviour ordered them to go to *Bethſaida*, yet they could not do it, becauſe the Wind was againſt them. Their next Attempt therefore was, to get to *Capernaum*, but even that they could not do; but, being forced to yield to the Storm, were carried a good Way below to the *South* of it, from whence they juſt touched at *Nazareth*, and thence proceeded to *Capernaum*.

IT was a common Opinion among the *Jews*, that Spirits did ſometimes appear cloathed in an human Form; but what put the Apoſtles at this Time in the greater Fright, was their imagining, that thoſe

who appeared at Night, were uſually evil Spirits, and that this, which they now ſaw, might poſſibly be the *Demon* who had raiſed the Storm.

WE may obſerve from ſeveral Parts of the *Goſpel*, particularly from *Luke* xiii. 23, 24. *John* xii. 34, 35. that it was uſual with our bleſſed Saviour to anſwer nothing to ſuch curious Queſtions, as had no Tendency to Edification, but to divert the People from them, by propoſing ſome more profitable Subject.

OUR Bleſſed Saviour, though the greateſt Part of St. *John's* Goſpel, takes an Occaſion, from the Multitudes coming after him out of a greedy Deſire to be fed, to diſcourſe to them of ſpiritual Bleſſings under the Metaphors of Meat and Drink; and for his Apology in ſo doing, we may obſerve, that, among the *Oriental* and *Jewiſh* Writers, no Metaphor was more common than this; that, to this Purpoſe, *Solomon*, in his Book of *Proverbs*, introduces Wiſdom crying in the Streets, *Come eat of my Bread, and drink of my Wine, which I have mingled*, Prov. ix. 5. for *they that eat me, ſhall yet be hungry, and they that drink me, ſhall yet be thirſty*, ſays the wiſe Son of *Sirach*; *for the Soul* (as *Plato* expreſſes it) *is nouriſhed by receiving and practiſing good Things, and Wiſdom, Temperance, and Piety, are the Food of a Soul, that can ſuck them in.* That, our Saviour calls himſelf *the Bread which came down from Heaven*, Philo, upon the Words of *Moſes* deſcants, *What Food can God rain down from Heaven, but that heavenly Wiſdom which he ſends down upon the Soul, that deſires it?* That as he exhorts the People to labour for Meat, that *periſhes not*; *Philo* declares, that the Wiſdom of God is the *Nurſe*, and *Nouriſher of thoſe, that deſire incorruptible Diet*; and that, as he compares himſelf to the *Manna*, which fell in the Wilderneſs; *the good Man* (ſays *Philo* again) *lifts up his Eyes to Heaven, looking to the Manna, the divine and heavenly Work, the incorruptible Food*

of

of the Soul, that loves God: and from hence we may perceive, why our Saviour inſiſts ſo much upon this Metaphor, even becauſe it was familiar to the *Jews*, and uſed by their moſt celebrated Writers. But to proceed.

WHETHER our Bleſſed Saviour was at *Jeruſalem*, on the *third Paſſover* after his Baptiſm, the *Evangeliſts* have not informed us; but 'tis very probable that he who came to fulfill all Righteouſneſs, would not neglect ſo great an Ordinance. Upon this Preſumption, 'tis moſt generally believed that he was there, though very likely he might not ſtay long, but as ſoon as the Feſtival was over, return into *Galilee*, becauſe the Rulers at *Jeruſalem* lay in wait for an Opportunity to put him to Death.

UPON his Return into *Galilee*, a certain Number of Scribes and *Phariſees* were ſent from *Jeruſalem*, to be Spies upon his Actions, and to criticiſe upon his Doctrine. Theſe Men obſerving, that when he and his Diſciples were to eat, they ſat down without waſhing their Hands, contrary to the common Cuſtom of the *Jews*, which (as they pretended) was founded upon a Tradition, expoſtulated with him the Reaſon for ſo doing. To whom inſtead of anſwering them directly) he put another Queſtion by way of Recrimination, *viz.* Why they, by their pretended Traditions, vacated the Laws of God, particularly, that ſo ſolemn one, of *honouring their Parents*, and revealing them in their Wants? And, thereupon looking upon them as ſo many Hypocrites, with whom he diſdained to hold any farther Converſe, he turned to the Multitude, and informed them, that true Piety did not conſiſt in outward Ceremonies, but in a ſincere Obſervance of the Laws of God; that no Pollution could be in what entered into a Man's Mouth, but only in what proceeded from he; for as it afterwards explains the Thing to his Diſciples) "whatever we eat does not "affect the Mind, the only Seat of Defilements,

for

" for it paſſes into the Stomach, and is ſeen thrown " out of the Body, ſo that, be it never ſo groſs, " or unclean it cannot pollute the Eater: But all " Pollution is from within, from the Corruption " of the Heart, ſuch as impure Thoughts, unchaſte " Deſires, unholy Purpoſes, immodeſt and indecent " Speeches, *&c.* theſe are the Things that leave a " laſting Stain upon the Soul, which a Thing, ſo " merely external, as omitting to waſh before " Meat, cannot do."

THIS was a Doctrine not well-pleaſing to the *Phariſees*, as his Diſciples told him; but they were a Set of People, whoſe Cenſure he juſtly deſpiſed, *blind Leaders of the Blind* (as he properly enough calls them) whoſe vain Traditions, as having nothing of divine Inſtitution in them, his Purpoſe was to aboliſh. And, from thence departing into the Coaſts of *Tyre* and *Sidon*, he entered into an Houſe, with a Deſign to conceal himſelf; but a certain *Syrophœnician* Woman, having got Intelligence of him, came and earneſtly requeſted of him to cure her Daughter, who was ſadly tormented with a Devil. Our Lord (for the Trial of her Faith) ſeemed at firſt to take Notice of her, until his Diſciples (to get rid of her Importunity) deſired him to grant her Requeſt, and diſmiſs her. His Miniſtry, he told them, was confined to *Judea*, nor was he properly ſent to any, but *loſt Sheep of the Houſe of* Iſrael. All this the poor Woman heard, but ſo far was ſhe from being diſcouraged by ſuch Coldneſs, that, advancing nearer, ſhe threw herſelf proſtrate at his Feet, imploring his Help for her Child; and when (in an harſh Metaphor) he told her, that *it was not proper to work thoſe Miracles for an* Heathen, *which were originally deſigned for God's People, the* Jews; the afflicted Mother owned indeed the Truth of which he urged, but then (continuing the ſame Figure) ſhe humbly hoped, *that a poor diſtreſſed* Heathen, *might in ſome ſmall Meaſure, partake*

of

of the Mercies which were more peculiarly promiſed to the Jews. Which Anſwer was ſo highly expreſſive of the Woman's Humility, Faith and Reliance, that he granted her Petition; ſo that, when ſhe returned home, ſhe found her Daughter laid upon the Bed and perfectly well.

THE *Sanhedrim*, which ſat at *Jeruſalem*, and was the ſupreme Court in all religious Affairs, ſent Meſſengers to *John the Baptiſt*, when he began his Preaching, enquiring who he was, and by what Authority he baptized, *John* i. 19. and, as the *Phariſees* had charged our Saviour's Diſciples with a Violation of the *Sabbath*, in plucking and robbing the Ears of the Corn, and himſelf with the ſame Crime, in curing the Sick on the *Sabbath-day*, it is not improbable that theſe Accuſations had reached *Jeruſalem*, and that the Scribes and Phariſees, here mentioned, were Emiſſaries ſent from the *Sanhedrim*, to watch and obſerve our Saviour. And this ſeems the rather to be ſo, becauſe they were ſo very ready (when they could not find him guilty of any Violation of the Laws of God) to pick a Quarrel with him about ſome Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, which he and his Diſciples, thought not ſo very neceſſay to be obſerved.

THE Traditions, in the *Jewiſh* Church, came to gain Credit upon this Preſumption, that *Moſes*, when he received the Law from God on Mount *Sinai*, which he recorded in his five Books, was inſtructed, at the ſame Time, in ſeveral Things which God enjoined him not to commit to Writing, for fear that the *Heathens* ſhould tranſcribe them: That in theſe Things, *Moſes* inſtructed his Succeſſor *Joſhua*, and from *Joſhua* they were tranſmitted through the *Elders* of the People, by oral Conveyance only, until *Ezra*, after the Return of the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, collected them all together, and made the *Cabbala*, in ſeventy two Books, which was kept by *Gamaliel*, and others that ſucceeded, as Heads of the

Sanhedrim

Sanhedrim, until the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*: That, about an hundred and twenty Years after this, *R. Judas* the Son of *Simon*, compoſed a Book of them, called the *Miſhna*, i. e. *the ſecond Law*, which is indeed the moſt antient Collection of Traditions that the *Jews* have: That three hundred Years after this, *R. Jonathan*, meeting with more, complied them into a larger Volume; and an hundred Years after this, another Rabbi made a Collection of ſuch as were found among the *Jews* who remained in *Babylon*: That theſe two (which are a kind of Supplement and Explication of the *Miſhna*) are called, the one the *Talmud* at *Jeruſalem*, and the other, of *Babylon*; and that by them the *Jews*, at this Day, are governed in Matters eccleſiaſtical, all the World over. Nay ſo extravagant in their Veneration for them, that we find them prefering them before the written Law; for, that *the Words of the Scribes are more lovely than thoſe of the Law, and the Words of the Antients of greater Weight than thoſe of the Prophets*, are ſtanding Maxims among them, though ſavouring not a little of Blaſphemy. In relation to the particular Cuſtom of waſhing before Meat, their Canon is, that, *Whoſoever deſpiſeth the waſhing of Hands, is worthy to be excommunicated, he comes to Poverty, and will be extirpated out of the World*: For (according to the Senſe of one of their Doctors, *viz. R. Aquiba*) *he that takes Meat with unwaſhed Hands, is worthy of Death*; and therefore, when the ſame Doctor was in Priſon, and had not Water enough both to drink and waſh his Hands, he choſe to do the latter; becauſe, *It is better*, ſays he, *to die with Thirſt, than to tranſgreſs the Tradition of the Elders*. 'Tis no Wonder then, that Perſons inured to thoſe Nations, ſhould ſo readily take Exception at our Saviour's omitting what were indeed (though they thought not ſo) Matters of an indifferent Nature.

THE Way, whereby the *Jews* made the Law of honouring and ſubſiſting their Father and Mother

of

of no Effect, was by pretending that whatever their Parents requeſted of them, was a *Corban*, i. e. that they had devoted it as a Gift or Offering to God, or to his Temple; and, whatever was thus devoted, was not to be touched, be the Neceſſity never ſo urgent: For their Canon about Vows was, "That they reach even to Things commanded, "and take Place, as well in Things required by "the Law, as Things indifferent; that a Man may "be ſo bound by them, that he cannot without "great Sin, do what God had commanded to be "done; and that in this Caſe, if he makes a Vow "which cannot be performed without breaking a "Commandment, his Vow muſt be ſatisfied, and "the Commandment violated." This was a Superſtition which the *Phariſees*, and other Doctors of the Law, who had a Property in the Gifts and Oblations, that were made to the Temple, thought themſelves concerned to indulge; and therefore, when any pretended that their Parents ſtood in need of their Help, they told them, that if they did but acquaint them, that it *was a Gift*, that they have vowed ſuch a Portion of their Eſtate to ſacred Uſes, that would, before God, excuſe them relieving their Parents. Nay they affirmed farther, that if a Man did but in a Paſſion, ſay, that the Thing, which another aſked of him, was a *Corban*, though it were not actually conſecrated to religious Uſes, this was Vow enough to prevent his relieving that other Perſon, even, putting the Caſe, that it were his own Father unleſs they ſhould abſolve him from it, which they would undertake to do for ſo many Shekels of Silver, *Levit.* xxvii. ſuch abundant Reaſon had our Bleſſed Saviour to charge the *Jewiſh* Doctors with making one of the greateſt Commands in the ſecond Table of the Law void by their Traditions concerning Vows.

IN ſeveral Places of the *Goſpel*, our Lord calls the *Phariſees*, *Hypocrites*; not only becauſe they placed

the Worſhip of God, and a great deal of Sanctity and Religion, in Ceremonies of human Inſtitution, and, though they pretended to extorardinary Purity, did all their good Works to be ſeen of Men, *Matth.* xxiii. 5. but, more eſpecially in this Place; becauſe, being ſuperſtitiouſly careful to avoid the outward Pollution of the Body by abſtaining from the Touch of any Thing, which they reputed unclean, and waſhing their Hands whenever they thought they had done ſo, they left that, which was within, *viz.* their Hearts and Affections, full of Iniquity, Uncleanneſs, Extortion, and Exceſs, *Matth.* xiii. 25. and *Luke* xi. 39. but, for *Chriſt*'s Example in this Particular, we muſt not be forward to pronounce Men *Hypocrites*; becauſe we have neither that Authority, nor that Knowledge of their Hearts, which he had.

TYRE and *Sidon* were two conſiderable Cities, ſeated on the *Mediterranean* Sea; and the Country adjoining to them, which lay at the *Weſt* and *North* of *Galilee*, was called the *Coaſts*, or *Territories* of *Tyre* and *Sidon*. The old Inhabitants of this Tract were Deſcendants of *Canaan* (for *Sidon* was his eldeſt Son) and continued in Poſſeſſion of it much longer than they did of any other Part of the Country. The *Greeks* call it *Phœnicia*, and when by Right of Conqueſt, it became a Province of *Syria*, it took the Name of *Syrophœnicia*; and from hence the Woman, whom St. *Matthew* calls a *Canaanite*, is by St. *Mark* ſtiled a *Syrophœnician*, as being both by Religion and Language a *Greek*.

LET us now go on with our Hiſtory. From the Coaſts of *Sidon*, our Lord paſſed Eaſtward to *Decapolis*, and from thence towards the Sea of *Galilee*, where, in his Way, he cured a deaf and dumb Man, by putting his Fingers in his Ears, and ſome of his Spittle upon his Tongue; and thence repairing to a Mountain, he not only cured every Perſon that was brought unto him, whatever his Malady or Diſtemper

Diſtemper was, but, in the Concluſion, fed all the Multitude, which amounted to four thouſand Men, beſides Women and Children (and who, for three Days ſucceſſively, had been attending him) with ſeven Loaves, and a few ſmall Fiſhes.

HAVING thus diſmiſſed the Company, he embarked with his Diſciples, for the Coaſt of *Dalmanutha*; but no ſooner was he arrived there, than the *Phariſees*, joining with their Enemies the *Sadducees*, came, and demanded of him a Sign from Heaven, in order to convince them, that he was the true *Meſſiah*: But, having firſt upbraided them with their Acuteneſs, in diſcerning the Face of the Sky, and from thence the Prognoſticks of fair or foul Weather, and their Blindneſs in not preceiving the manifeſt Signs of the *Meſſiah*'s Coming, he remitted them (as he had done before) to the Miracle of his own Reſurrection, and ſo ſailed back with his Diſciples.

HIS Diſciples, in the Hurry of their Departure, had forgot to take Bread with them; and therefore, when our Saviour, in their Paſſage, gave them Caution to take Care of the Leaven of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*, and they were ignorant enough to take his Word in a literal Senſe, he firſt gently reproved the Blindneſs of their Underſtandings, and the Shortneſs of their Memories, who had ſo ſoon forgotten his miraculous Multiplication of the Loaves and Fiſhes, at two different Times, and then gave them to underſtand, that his Words did not concern the Leaven of Bread, but the corrupt Doctrines of the *Phariſees* and *Sadducees*.

WITH this Diſcourſe they landed at *Bethſaida*, which though the Birth-place of ſeveral of the Apoſtles, had yet, by the Perverſeneſs and Infidelity of its Inhabitants, ſo offended him, that when a blind Man was preſented to him for Cure, he would not do it in the City, in the Sight of the Inhabitants; but, taking him out of the Gate, he anointed his Eyes with his Spittle, and laid his Hands on

them. The Man, at first, saw Objects indistinctly, Men like Trees walking; but, when our Lord had laid his Hands upon his Eyes the second Time, he restored him to his perfect Sight, and so sent him home, with a Charge not to return into the City, nor to discover the Thing to any Person belonging to that Place.

FROM that Place he departed into the Coasts of *Cæsarea Philippi*, where, being minded to make some Trial of his *Apostles* Faith and Proficiency, he demanded of them, What Opinion Mankind had of him, and whom they took him to be? Some (say they) take you to be *John the Baptist* risen from the Dead; some *Elias*; sent down from Heaven; and others *Jeremias*, or some other of the ancient Prophets, restored to Life again; but when he continued asking what their Notion of him was, and *Simon* (in the Name of the rest) had made an open Confession, that he *was* Christ, *the Son of the living God*, he not only allowed that Confession to be true, and what was confirmed by the Attestation of God himself, but, in Allusion to the Name he had given him, which signifies a *Rock* or *Stone*, he told *Simon*, "That he would make him a *Foundation-stone*, or a "prime Minister in building his Church, which "should be so firmly established, that all the Pow-"er and Policy of its Enemies should not be able "at any Time to destroy it; and that, for the more "orderly Government of it, he would give him the "*Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven*, so that his Sen-"tence whenever it should regularly exclude, or re-"ceive in any Person on Earth, should be ratified "and confirmed in Heaven." But then to prevent the ill Use that might be made on this Discovery, he strictly charged his Apostles not to declare to any Man, that he was the *Messiah*.

PERCEIVING by this Discourse with *Peter*, that his Disciples had got a right Notion of his Office and Divinity, he began thenceforward to prepare their

their Minds for his Sufferings, and to talk more openly of his Death and Reſurrection. One Day therefore as he was inſiſting on the Sufferings which he was to undergo at *Jeruſalem*, and *Peter*, unable to endure a Thought ſo diſagreeable to the Dignity of his Maſter, deſired him to deſiſt, he gave him a very ſharp Rebuke, as a Perſon whoſe Advice croſſed his gracious Purpoſes of Man's Redemption, and ſavoured of nothing but worldly Grandeur; and therefore, to extinguiſh in them all Notions of a *temporal Kingdom*, he called his Diſciples, and told them, that, "Whoſoever pretended to profeſs his Religi-
"on, ſhould take up his Croſs, or patiently ſubmit
"to all manner of Perſecutions, in ſure and certain
"Hope of an happy Immortality, which he would
"procure of his Followers, when he was in his
"Kingdom, in which, ſome that were then preſent
"among them, e're it were long (but certainly be-
"fore the Day of their Death) ſhould ſee him
"happily inſtated."

ABOUT eight Days after this, our Lord to revive the Hearts of his Diſciples, as well to inſtruct them more fully in the Nature of his Kingdom, thought it not improper to give ſome of them, at leaſt, a Specimen of his future Glory, and accordingly, taking with him his three moſt intimate Apoſtles, *Peter James*, and *John*, he aſcended an high Mountain, and there (while he was employed in Prayer) he was ſuddenly transformed into another Kind of Appearance; for a bright Luſtre darted from his Face, more glorious than the Sun; and a dazzling Splendor piercing from his Body through his Garments, made them appear whiter than Snow, and more radiant than the Light. During this heavenly Scene, there appeared *Moſes* and *Elias*, clothed with all the Brightneſs and Majeſty of a glorified State, familiarly converſing with him, and diſcourſing of his Death and Sufferings.

WHILE

WHILE this Intercourſe continued between theſe three, *Peter* and his two Fellow-Apoſtles were fallen aſleep, but, waking juſt before their Departure, they were exceedingly ſurpriſed, and terrified at the Sight of ſo much Glory and Majeſty. *Peter* indeed begged of his Maſter, that they might continue in that happy Place, *and erect three Tents, one for him, and the other two for* Moſes *and* Elias: But while he was thus talking, ſcarce knowing what he ſaid in his Fright and Tranſport, a bright and ſhining Cloud ſuddenly came over them, and a Voice from thence proclaimed, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, here ye him.* Upon which the Apoſtles were ſeized with a greater Conſternation than ever, and fell proſtrate upon the Ground; but, upon our Lord's touching and encouraging them, they looked up, and ſaw none but him, for the other two were vaniſhed.

AS they deſcended the Mount, he ſtrictly commanded them not to tell any Man what ſtrange Things they had ſeen, *until he was riſen from the Dead.* They were ready to obey his Commands, but did not rightly underſtand his laſt Words, and therefore they had ſome Altercations among themſelves concerning the Meaning of his *riſing from the Dead:* And another Difficulty they had to ſolve, for, having ſeen *Elias* with our Saviour upon the Mount, they could not forbear aſking him, What Reaſon the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* had for aſſerting, that that Prophet was to come upon the Earth before the *Meſſiah?* To which our Saviour replied, That theſe *Jewiſh* Doctors were not miſtaken in their Notion, becauſe *Elias* was in Effect come already, and had received the ſame bad Treatment from his Countrymen, that himſelf in a ſhort Time was to expect; from whence they perceived, that by the *Elias* he ſpoke of, he plainly intended *John the Baptiſt.*

WE ſhall now conclude this Chapter in explaining the Difficulties that occur in this Period of our Hiſtory.

DECAPOLIS

DECAPOLIS is a Country in *Paleſtine*, which was ſo called becauſe it contained *ten Cities*, ſome ſituated on the *Eaſt*, and others on the *Weſt-ſide* of the River *Jordan*, the firſt and principal City is *Scythopolis*, and the reſt (according to *Pliny*) are, 2d, *Philadelphia*: 3d, *Raphanæ*; 4th, *Gadara*; 5th, *Hippos*; 6th, *Dion*; 7th, *Pella*; 8th, *Geraſa*; 9th, *Canatha*; and 10th, *Damaſcus*; though others reckon them after another Manner, as *Pliny* himſelf obſerves.

CHRIST often made Uſe of viſible Signs, to repreſent that divine inviſible Virtue, which was inherent in him, and which, upon that Occaſion, he intended to exert: And therefore, becauſe deaf Perſons ſeem to have their Ears cloſed, he put his Fingers in the Man's Ears, to intimate, that, by his Power, he would open them; and, becauſe the Tongue of the Dumb ſeems to be tied, or to cleave to the Palate, therefore he moiſtened it with Spittle, to ſignify that he would looſe and give free Motion to it. Theſe, 'tis true, were not capable to effect the Cure, but they had this Uſe in them, that they excited the Obſervation and Attention of the People, before whom theſe Cures were wrought.

WHAT St. *Matthew* calls *Magdala*, St. *Mark* names *Dalmanutha*; and the Reaſon hereof is, becauſe theſe two Places lay very near together, and *Dalmanutha* very probably within the Precincts of *Magdala*.

THE Leaven of the *Phariſees* was their Hypocriſy, and too ſcrupulous Obſervance of the Traditions of their Elders; and that of the *Sadducees* their Denial of the Exiſtence of Angels and Devils, the Reſurrection of the Body, and the Immortality of the Soul; ſo that the Meaning of our Saviour's Caution to his Apoſtles is, To avoid the Principles of thoſe, who place the Sum of their Religion in outward Performances, which avails nothing to the Sanctification of the Soul; and reject all ſuch Doctrines as

tended

tended to ſubvert Religion, by cutting off all Hopes of Happineſs in a future State.

THE Reaſon of our Saviour's charging the Man whom he had cured of Blindneſs, that he ſhould not return to the City, is founded upon the Infidelity of the People of *Bethſaida*, wherein he upbraids them, *Matth.* xi. 21.

THE City of *Cæſarea Philippi* is ſituated near the the Head of the River *Jordan*, and was by the *Canaanites* called *Laiſh*, or *Lechem*, Judg. xviii. 7. but being taken by ſome of the *Danites*, it was by them called *Dan*, and is generally reputed the utmoſt Border Northward of the Land of *Iſrael*. It was uſually called, by *Heathen* Writers, *Paneas*, from the adjoining Spring, *Paneum*, or *Panion*, which is commonly taken for the Fountain-head of *Jordan*. *Auguſtus Cæſar* gave it, and all the Territories belonging to it, to *Herod the Great*. He having rebuilt the Place, gave it and the Tetrarchy of *Iturea* and *Trachonitis* (which is adjoining) to his youngeſt Son *Philip*; who, when he had enlarged and beautified it, ſo as to make it the Capital of his Dominions, and chief Place of his Reſidence, gave it the Name of *Cæſarea Philippi*; partly, to complement *Tiberius Cæſar*, who was then Emperor; partly to diſtinguiſh it from another *Cæſarea*, mentioned in *Acts* x. 1. ſituate on the *Mediterranean*, and built by his Father in Honour of his great Benefactor *Auguſtus Cæſar*.

THOSE, who held that *Jeſus* was *John the Baptiſt* riſen from the Dead, were of the ſame Opinion with *Herod the Tetrarch*, *Matth.* xiv. 2. and ſeem to have imbibed the Notion of the *Phariſees*; who (according to *Joſephus*) uſed to ſay, that *a good Man might eaſily return to Life again*. Thoſe, who took him for *Elias*, ran into the general Opinion of the Notion, that *Elias* was to come before the *Meſſiah*, ſo long as his mean Appearance was contrary to their Expectations: And thoſe, who thought him to be *Jeremias*,

remias, ſeem to have eſpouſed the Sentiments of their Doctors, who looked upon that Prophet as the Head of the whole Order, not improbably upon the Character which God gives him, *Before I formed thee in the Belly I knew thee, and before thou waſt out of the Womb I ſanctified and I ordained thee, a Prophet to the Nations*, Jer. i. 5.

THAT the reſt of the great Truth which St. *Peter* declares, *viz.* that *Jeſus Chriſt was the Son of the living God*, no one can doubt who calls to Mind the Atteſtation made of it before by *John the Baptiſt*, John i. 34. the frequent Confeſſion of it by evil Spirits diſpoſſeſſed of before their Eyes, *Mark* iii. 15. and that full Declaration of it in the whole Fraternity, *We believe, and are ſure, that thou art that Chriſt, the Son of the living God*, *John* vi. 69. for which Reaſon we find the Fathers, upon this Occaſion, ſpeaking of St. *Peter*, as the Mouth, the Tongue, the Voice of the Church, and a kind of Foreman to the Reſt of the Apoſtles; for this they might think a Matter of Decency and good Manners, a Means to prevent Confuſion and Diſorder, and a Token of that Union and Harmony, which was among them, that one Man ſhall ſpeak for all the reſt. And why that *one Man* ſhould be St. *Peter*, rather than any of the reſt, may very well be imputed to the Seniority of his Age, the natural Fervour of his Temper, and his long Attendance upon our Bleſſed Saviour, than ſeveral of the reſt had been employed in. Theſe are ſufficient Reaſons for his delivering the Judgment of the Company, and for our accounting his Confeſſion the common Voice of all to a Queſtion, which had evidently been propounded to them all.

OUR Saviour's Anſwer in the Words in the Text are, *Fleſh and Blood hath not revealed this to thee, but my Father which is in Heaven*, Matth. xvi. 17. But how did God reveal this to St. *Peter?* Thoſe who pretend that he had a *peculiar Revelation*, not vouchſafed to any others, without which he could

not have owned *Chriſt* to have been *the Son of God*, muſt not only allow the like Revelation to *Nathaniel*, John ii. 49. to the *Centurion*, who was preſent at our Lord's Crucifixion, *Matth.* xxvii. 64. and to all others, who made Declaration of the ſame Faith; but muſt likewiſe excuſe all thoſe *Jews* who did not believe in *Chriſt*; becauſe it was not in their Power ſo to do without his peculiar Revelation. Without running ourſelves into thoſe Premunires therefore, we may reaſonably conclude, that the Senſe of our Saviour's Words is this,——"What others ſay of me, *viz.* "that I am *John*, *Elias*, *Jeremias*, or the like, this "thou haſt learnt from Men; but the Faith which "thou haſt now confeſſed concerning me, though "it required of thee a due Attention to the Proofs "given of it, yet, ſince theſe Proofs are the Doctrine "which I teach from God, and the Miracles, done "in Confirmation of it, are apparently the Finger "of God, thy Faith muſt be acknowledged to be "the Reſult, not of human Wiſdom, but of divine "Revelation. God has given thee a teachable and "intelligent Mind, to perceive, by my Doctrine and Miracles, that I am the true *Meſſiah*, notwithſtanding the Obſcurity of my Appearance; "and therefore thou mayeſt be truly ſaid to be "*taught of God*, becauſe my Doctrine is the *Word*, "and my Miracles are the *Power* of God."

PETER was ſo called, either becauſe his being the Apoſtle of the *Jews*, to whom the Goſpel was firſt tendered, might make him in ſome Senſe, one of the firſt Foundations of the Chriſtian Church, *Eph.* ii. 20. or becauſe the Firmneſs and Reſolution, werewith he ſupported the Chriſtian Cauſe, even to the Day of his Martrydom, was very eminent and remarkable.

IT is very evident, that, whereas the Word *Church* is capable of two Senſes, and taken, in common Speech, ſometimes for a Society of Perſons worſhipping God, and ſometimes for a Place ſet apart for the

the publick Performance of ſuch Worſhip; our Saviour intends it here in the latter of theſe Senſes, and that the *Building of this Church* (which is a Metaphor of frequent Uſe in the *New Teſtament*) ſignifies the doing of thoſe Things, either in private Chriſtians, or publick Communities of them, which may contribute to their Growth in Grace and Goodneſs, their mutual Strength and Support, their Perfection and Continuance; and accordingly, Chriſtians thus untited together, are called *a ſpiritual Houſe*, 1 Pet. ii. 5. *an heavenly Building, fitly framed together, and an Habitation of God through the Spirit*, Eph. ii. 21, 22.

THE Words in the Text are,——*The Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*, Matth. xvi. 18. Some Interpreters mean by the Word *Hades*, which we tranſlate *Hell*, the State or Place of the Dead; and by the *Gates of Hades, and Power of Death*; and ſo the Words, applied to the Members of *Chriſt*'s myſtical Body, or to particular Chriſtians, will mean, "That though at preſent Death has the Dominion "over them, yet ſhall not his Conqueſt of thoſe that "die in the Lord, be abſolute and final. They ſhall "revive a ſecond Time to a better Life, and tri-"umph over this laſt great Enemy of Mankind." Others by *Hell* underſtand the Place of infernal Torments; and ſo, by an eaſy Figure, apply it to the Devil and his Angels, inhabiting thoſe Regions of Darkneſs; but then becauſe the *Gates of Cities* are not only, in all Countries Places of Strength, but among the *Jews* more eſpecially, were Places of *Judicature*, and where Magiſtrates met to conſult for the Security of the Publick; it hence comes to paſs, that by *the Gates of Hell* they mean the *Strength* and *Policy* of the Wicked, and ſo make the Senſe of our Saviour's Promiſe to be this,——That notwithſtanding all the wicked Contrivances of *Satan* and his Inſtruments, to deſtroy the Profeſſion of Chriſtianity in the World, yet all their Power and Policy

ſhould not be able to affect it. *Chriſt*'s holy Religion ſhould ſtand and flouriſh, in deſpight of their wicked Contrivances; and, however a Defection might happen in ſome particular Places, to the End of the World he ſhould never want a Society of Men, confeſſing, with St. *Peter*, that *Jeſus is the Chriſt, the Son of the living God*, Matth. xvi. 16.

IN ſeveral Parts of this *Goſpel* we find our Saviour enjoining the People, whom he had cured, not to make any Publication of his Miracles, *Matt.* viii. 4. and ix. 30. but it is an Injunction of a particular Nature, not to diſcover that he was the *Chriſt*, though this was an Article neceſſary for every Man to know and believe, in Order to his Salvation. Now, this was a Point neceſſary for all to know, yet the Apoſtles were not the proper Perſons, at this Time, to declare it; becauſe it might look like a kind of Confederacy between them, if they ſhould prove too laviſh in the Commendations of their Maſter. It would much better become his infinite Wiſdom therefore, to find out himſelf a proper Opportunity for the Diſcovery of this great Truth, which could not be preached *out of Seaſon*, without drawing the Envy of the *Phariſees* upon him, and obſtructing the Progreſs of the Goſpel; which could hardly be believed, conſidering the low Circumſtances wherein he appeared, and which, had it been believed, might have encouraged the Attempt of the *Jews* to come and make him a King, *John* vi. 15. What therefore our Saviour ſays to his three Apoſtles, in Relation to his Transfiguration, that they ſhould *tell no Man of it*, until *he was riſen from the Dead*, *Matth.* xvii. 9. is applicable to this Paſſage likewiſe. For, after his Reſurrection, they were by Office to be his Witneſſes, and to declare to others that he was the *Chriſt*; becauſe they could then do it, not only without Suſpicion of Conedſeracy, but with great Advantages and Succeſs, after

that

that *Chriſt* had taken Poſſeſſion of his Kingdom; and had teſtified this by ſitting down at the Right-hand of Power, and by ſending down upon them the Holy Ghoſt, to enable them to confirm their Teſtimony.

PETER's Words in the *Greek* tranſlated, *Be it far from thee Lord*, we may render, *Be merciful to thyſelf, Spare thyſelf.* "Since the Rulers at *Jeruſalem* have ſuch malevolent Deſigns againſt thee, why ſhould thou think of going any more among them? If they intend to evil intreat thee, and take away thy Life, *be thou kind and favourable to thyſelf*, avoid the Danger by keeping at a Diſtance from it, and conſult thine own Preſervation by continuing here." This ſeems to be the proper Senſe of St. *Peter*'s Words, and they were doubtleſs ſpoken with a good Intention, and ſingular Affection for his Maſter, but ſtill they argued great Weakneſs in him, in pretending to contradict one, whom he had juſt before acknowledged to be *the Chriſt, the Son of God*, and denote him ignorant of the Redemption of Mankind by that Death, which God in his wiſe Counſel had determined.

THE Words of our Bleſſed Saviour upon this Occaſion are *Get thee behind me Satan, thou art an Offence to me*, Matth. xvi. 23. Not that we are to think that our Saviour ever imagined, that St. *Peter* had any pernicious Deſigns againſt him, as the great Enemy of Mankind has, when he tempts and deludes them into Sin; but his Meaning is, that his Interpoſition in this Affair was very unſeaſonable, and highly repugnant to his Deſign of coming into the World, which was to ſave it. "Thou thinkeſt perhaps (ſays he) *Peter*, that in thy Advice thou ſhewſt thy Kindneſs to me, as a Friend, that reſpects my Welfare, and art tender of my Preſervation; but inſtead of that, thou art an Adverſary to me (for ſo the Word *Satan* ſignifies, *Numb.* xxii. 32. 2 *Sam.* xix. 23. 1 *Kings* v. 4.) in thy endeavouring

vouring to draw me aſide from doing what is my Father's Will and Command, *John* x. 18. I told thee that *I muſt ſuffer*; that ſuch is the determinate Counſel of God, and ſuch my fixed Purpoſe and Reſolution; and therefore all Advice to the contrary is what I cannot away with; it is an Offence to me; it is an Abomination." So dear was the Salvation of Mankind to *Jeſus Chriſt*, that he could not hear even one of the Chief of his Apoſtles diſſuading him from it, without ſome Emotions of Anger and Indignation.

AMONG ſeveral Nations it was a Cuſtom for the Criminal to bear the Croſs, whereon he was to ſuffer, to the Place of Execution; and, in Alluſion to this, our Saviour makes uſe of this Phraſe to denote our chearfully bearing thoſe Trials and Perſecutions, which the divine Providence brings upon us in the Execution of our Duty, and our Adherence to his moſt holy Religion.

OUR Saviour's Words,——*Verily I ſay unto you, there are ſome of them who are ſtanding here, who ſhall not taſte of Death, till they ſee the Son of Man coming in his Kingdom*, Matth. xvi. 28. ſome Interperters both antient and modern, underſtand of our Lord's Transfiguration on the Mount; in which there was ſome Glimpſe of the Glory of his Father, and the Attendance of Angels; but, beſides that this happened too ſoon (no more than ſix Days) after theſe Words were ſpoken to need the Expreſſion of *ſome of them not ſeeing Death* until it came to paſs, which muſt at leaſt denote ſome Diſtance of Time, 'tis very plain, that, at this wonderful Sight, none of the three Apoſtles could behold *Chriſt coming in his Judgment*, becauſe his Kingdom did not commence till after his Reſurrection, when *all Power both in Heaven and Earth was given him*, Matt. xviii. 18. Others imagine that the Paſſage relates to the great Day of Judgment, becauſe 'tis ſaid, that *Chriſt* will *reward*

every

every Man according to his Work, ver. 27. But then, on the other Hand, it may be alledged, that there was none in the Company then ſtanding there, who was not to die, or to taſte of Death (which is the *Jewiſh* Phraſe) long before the Coming *of that great and terrible Day of the Lord*: And therefore others have concluded, *that this Coming of* Chriſt *in his Kingdom* relates to another Event, *viz.* the Deſtruction of the *Jewiſh* Church and Nation, wherein our Lord may properly enough be ſaid to *come in the Glory of his Father, and with his Angels*, to puniſh the *Jews*, in deſtroying them; and reward the *Chriſtians*, in preſerving them; *according to their Works*. This happened above forty Years after our Saviour's Death, when ſome in the Company (as particularly *John* the *Evangeliſt* actually was) might be alive, and Witneſſes of the Accompliſhment of our Lord's Menaces againſt that devoted City and Nation. This is the popular Interpretation at preſent, but I cannot ſee, why the other Parts of our Saviour's Exaltation may not be taken into the Account; for, as he began to enter upon his Kingdom by his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion into Heaven, ſo his ſending the Holy Ghoſt upon the Apoſtles, and the terrible Judgment which he brought upon the *Jewiſh* Nation, may well be looked upon as the Effects and Conſequences of his glorious Reign.

WHAT St. *Luke* calls *about eight Days*, Chap. ix. 29. St. *Matthew*, and St. *Mark* make *after ſix Days*: But the Reaſon of this ſeeming Diſagreement is, that the two laſt *Evangeliſts* compute only the intire Days between our Saviour's Diſcourſe, and his going up into the Mount, and therefore ſtile them ſix; whereas St. *Luke*, including both the Days of his Diſcourſe, and his Aſcent, calls them eight Days. And this is evident from the Word *about*; which when any Number is mentioned, is always added to ſignify, that it is not exact, but wants ſomething to make it

compleat,

compleat, as may be ſeen in *Matt.* xiv. 21. *Luke* i. 56. iii. 23. xxiii. 44. *John* iv. 6. xix. 14. *Acts* ii. 41, *&c.*

THAT the Mountain on which our Saviour was transfigured, was Mount *Tabor* (which ſtood in the Midſt of the *Lower Galilee*, at an equal Diſtance between the *Mediterranean* and the Sea of *Tiberias*) is a Matter confirmed by the Voice of all *Antiquity*, but ſome modern Writers are of a different Opinion; becauſe *Tabor* (ſay they) does not ſtand in the Way between *Cæſarea Philippi* and *Capernaum*; and that our Saviour travelled from *Cæſarea* to this Mount, (which is almoſt through the whole Length of *Galilee*) is a little too much to ſuppoſe. *Lightfoot* in *Mark* ix. But this he had Space enough to do in the ſix intervening Days between his Diſcourſe and his Tranſfiguration; and that he really did ſo, is made very probable, both from St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, who ſeem to intimate, that after he had finiſhed his Diſcourſe with his Diſciples, he entered immediately upon his Journey; and accordingly, we hear nothing more of him, until the Expiration of ſix whole Days, *Matt.* xvii. 1. *Luke* ix. 2. but, after his Return from the Mount, and Cure of the *Demoniac*, that was brought before him, 'tis ſaid, that he and his *Diſciples departed thence, and paſſed through* Galilee, *i. e.* the remaining Part of *Galilee*, to come to *Capernaum*, Luke iii. 30, 33.

THE Doctrine of the general Reſurrection they could not but underſtand, for that the *Phariſees* believed, *Acts* xxiv. 15. and of that *Martha* makes Acknowledgment, *John* xi. 24. nor could they be ignorant of the Meaning of any particular Man's Riſing from the Dead, for of that they had Inſtances in the *Old Teſtament*, and had lately ſeen an Example of it at the Gates of *Naim*, Luke vii. 15. but being taught out of their Law, *that* Chriſt *was to abide for ever*, John xii. 34. and *that of his Kingdom there ſhould be no End*, Luke i. 33. they could not tell how

to

to reconcile his Death (which was to be previous to his Reſurrection) to the Prediction of the Prophets, and their own Conceptions of his temporal Kingdom; and therefore we may obſerve, that when *Chriſt* was dead, their Hopes died with him, *We truſted, that it had been he who ſhould have redeemed* Iſrael, *Luke* xxiv. 21. but that, at his Reſurrection they revived again, which made them aſk, *Wilt thou, at this Time, reſtore the Kingdom to* Iſrael? Acts i. 6.

CHAP. III.

From our LORD's Transfiguration *to his laſt Entry into* Jeruſalem.

THE Day following the Lord's Transfiguration (for that Tranſaction was, very probably, in the Night-Time) as he came down from the Mount, he perceived the *Scribes* in deep Debate with the Apoſtles he had left behind him; and while he was enquiring into the Subject of their Diſpute, a certain Man breaking through the Croud fell proſtrate at his Feet, and beſought him to have Pity upon his only Son, a deplorable Object, a Lunatick, and poſſeſſed, deaf and dumb, often thrown upon the Ground, and into the Fire and Water, racked with violent Convulſions, accompanied with diſmal Outcries, Foamings, Bruiſes and Torments, and every Way in ſo deſperate a Condition, that his Diſciples, in his Abſence, were not able to cure him. Our Lord, upon hearing of this, was not a little grieved at the Want of Faith in his Diſciples, but ordered the Child to be brought to him. As he was drawing near, the Devil began to rack him with Convulſions, which put his Father in a terrible Fright; and when our Lord commanded the evil Spirit to depart out of the young Man, and never to moleſt him more, after ſome hideous Outcries, he tore and diſtorted him to ſuch a Degree, that he left him breathleſs on the Ground, ſo that many concluded he was quite dead.

dead. But *Jeſus* taking him by the Hand, lifted him up, and delivered him to his Father perfectly cured, to the great Aſtoniſhment of all the Spectators: And when his Diſciples in private deſired to know the Reaſon why they could not caſt out this Spirit, he imputed it, partly to their Want of Faith, and partly to this Spirit's being of a Kind which was not to be ejected without Faſting and Prayer.

BEFORE we proceed, let us attend to the following Remarks on the foregoing Paſſages.

THE *Evangeliſt* acquaints us that while our Saviour was at Prayer on the Mount, St. *Peter and they that were with him, were heavy with Sleep*, Luke ix. 32. which, in ſome Meaſure confirms the Conjecture, that the Transfiguration was in the Night; a Time much more proper for the Diſplay of the Luſtre of ſuch an Appearance, than if it had happened in the broad Day-light.

WHAT the Subject-matter of the Debate was, between the *Scribes* and his Diſciples, the *Evangeliſts* have not informed us; but it ſeems not unlikely, that the Scribes were diſputing with the Apoſtles, about their Maſter's ejecting Devils, and the Power, which in that Matter he had conferred upon them, becauſe in the Caſe before them, they ſaw them nonpluſs'd, and not able to caſt a Devil out of one, who, in his Abſence was brought to them. This is the rather probable, not only becauſe our Saviour's diſpoſſeſſing Devils was what gravelled and vexed the *Scribes* and Phariſees more than all his other Miracles, and forced them to the ſorry Refuge of, *He caſts out Devils by* Beelzebub *the Prince of Devils*; but becauſe upon his coming to the timely Relief of his Apoſtles, he demanded of the *Scribes*, what they were queſtioning and diſputing about, it immediately follows, *One of the Multitude anſwered and ſaid, Maſter, I have brought unto thee my Son, which hath a dumb ſpirit,—And I Spake to thy Diſciples,*

that they ſhould caſt him out, and they could not, Mark ix. 17, 18.

THE *Greek* Word tranſlated *Lunatick*, coming from a Word that ſignifies the Moon, anſwers exactly to the *Engliſh Lunatick*, from *Luna*; but there is a Miſtake in rendering it. For, whereas the *Engliſh* Word *Lunatick* is commonly taken for a Madman; ſuch a one eſpecially, whoſe Diſtemper grows worſe towards the Full of the Moon; 'tis plain from all Symptoms, ſuch as being convulſed, foaming at the Mouth, and bruiſing and tearing himſelf, *&c.* that the Diſorder under which this Perſon laboured, was an *Epilepſy*, or the *Falling-ſickneſs*. Now the Reaſon why this Diſeaſe is expreſſed by the Word *Lunatick*, is becauſe the Moon hath the ſame Influence on it, that it has in Madneſs. Both Diſtempers lie in the Brain, and the Changes of the Moon affect thoſe that are ſubject to the one, as well as the other. When therefore the *Evangeliſts* tell us of this Epileptick, that the Devil took him, that he threw him down, caſt him into a Fit, and made him tear and bruiſe himſelf: The Meaning of all this is, that as, in thoſe Days, it was a common Thing for the Devil to have Power over Men's Bodies, which Power he employed in bringing Diſeaſes upon them: So it was in the preſent Caſe. The Devil that poſſeſſed this young Man, caſt him into frequent Fits of the Falling-ſickneſs (as all Demoniacks, we find, have one Diſtemper or other attending them) of which there was no Way to cure him, but by caſting out the Devil.

THE Rebuke which our Saviour utters upon this Occaſion, *O faithleſs and perverſe Generation, how long ſhall I be with you? &c.* Matt. xvii. 17. ſeems to be intended for the whole Company, and every one to have a Share in it, in Proportion to their Deſerts. The Diſciples are not exempted, for they are charged with Infidelity. The Father of the Patient is pointed at, for his Faith was wavering, *Mark* xi.

xi. 21, *&c.* And the whole Nation of the Character of old, *A very froward and perverſe Generation, in whom is no Faith*, Deut. xxiii. 5, 20.

JOSEPHUS, who himſelf was a *Phariſee*, and well acquainted with the Notions of every Sect among the *Jews*, gives it for a current Opinion, that the Demons, in his and ſome preceeding Ages, were nothing elſe but the Souls of wicked Men, who after Death took Poſſeſſion of the Living; and were continually either afflicting and tormenting, or exciting and ſolliciting them to ſuch Sins as they found were agreeable and complexional to them; and that, according to their different Ways of vexing or tempting thoſe that they poſſeſſed, they had different Appellations given them, an unclean Spirit, a deaf and dumb Spirit, a Spirit of Infirmity, *&c.* In Conformity to this Notion, perhaps it is, that our Saviour here takes Notice of the different Kinds of evil Spirits, and, as among wicked Men, there are different Degrees of Impiety, and ſome are more hardened and profligate than others; ſo he ſeems to intimate, that ſome of theſe Spirits are more deſperate and malicious than others, *Matt.* xii. 45. But all of them obſtinate enough, (might they have their own Option) unwillingly to leave the Bodies they have taken Poſſeſſion of. Here they think themſelves ſafe, and, in ſome meaſure, ſcreened from the divine Vengeance; and therefore we find them, at ſometimes crying to our Lord, *Let us alone, what have we to do with thee? Art thou come to torment us*, Matt. viii. 29. And, at others, when commanded to depart, tearing and torturing the Poſſeſſed, and quiting their Habitation, not without much Reluctancy, *Mark* ix. 26. The Apoſtles, no doubt had adjured this evil Spirit before, in their Maſter's Name, and on ſeveral Occaſions had found the prevailing Power of it, even when their Faith was not ſo well improved, as it was at preſent: And yet, how Faith becomes neceſſary in the Exorciſm of Devils, when we find Strangers doing that in the Name of *Chriſt*, *Mark*

ix.

ix. 38. or how the Faith of the Apoſtles came to be defective now, when not many Days before it was ſo very effectual, *Mark* vi. 13, why ſome evil Spirits were Proof againſt the Name of *Chriſt*, whilſt others fled at the bare Mention of it; and why ſome ſurrendered at the firſt Summons, while Faſting and Prayer was the only Artillery that could diſlodge others? Theſe, and many more Queſtions that might be raiſed from our Saviour's Words, are Points wherein the beſt Commentators, we have met with, have not once attempted to give us any Satisfaction.

BUT to go on. From the Mount of Transfiguration, our Lord proceeded in his Journey through the other Parts of *Galilee* towards *Capernaum*, and as he was on his Way, he acquainted his Diſciples, the ſecond time, with his approaching Death and Reſurrection, deſiring them to take good Notice of what he told them; but the Hopes of a temporal Kingdom had ſo intoxicated their Minds, that they found it very difficult to believe or conceive what he ſaid, and yet they were afraid to aſk him to explain it.

THE Words in the Text are, *They underſtood not this Saying, and it was hid from them*, Luke ix. 45. They underſtood our Saviour's Words, no doubt, and what the Import was of his being delivered into the Hands of Men, and put to death; but then they could not comprehend how their Maſter, whom they knew to be the *Meſſiah*, the Son of God, and whom, conſequently, they believed to be immortal and eternal, could poſſibly be put to death, or ſuffer the Affronts and Outrages of Men. Theſe Notions to them ſeemed incompatible; and therein they conceived a Myſtery which they could not underſtand: But the modern *Jews* have endeavoured to reconcile theſe two Notions, by inventing the Diſtinction of the *Meſſiah Ben Joſeph*, who was to die, and the *Meſſiah Ben David*, who was to triumph and live for ever.

IN the ſame Jouney there aroſe a Diſpute among the Apoſtles, which of them ſhould have the chief Place of Dignity in their Maſter's Kingdom; ſtill dreaming of a temporl Sovereignty. This our Saviour by his divine Spirit knew; and therefore, to give an effectual Check to their ambitious Thoughts, he firſt informed them that the only Way for any Man to become great in his Kingdom, was to be lowly in his own Eſteem; and then calling a little Child, and ſetting him in the Midſt of them, he propoſed him as a Pattern of Meekneſs and Humility, recommended ſuch Children, and in them all humble *Chriſtians*, to the Favour of Mankind; cautioned them againſt doing any Injury, or giving any Offence to ſuch, becauſe of their Guardian Angels; and, to remove the Occaſion of all ſuch Offences, exhorted them to mortify their inordinate Affections, though they were to them as an Eye, an Hand, or a Foot, becauſe his heavenly Father, (like a diligent Shepherd, that delights in the Recovery of a ſtray Sheep) was unwilling that any Believer ſhould periſh. Together with theſe Reaſons againſt Scandal and Offences, he preſcribed ſome excellent Rules in Relation to brotherly Reproof, and for the Enforcement of this laſt Duty, he propounded the Parable of a certain King, who calling his Servants to Account, found that one of them owed him an immenſe Sum, no leſs than ten thouſand Talents, which, upon his Inſolvency, and humble Petition, he freely forgave; and yet this very Wretch was no ſooner out of the King's Preſence, than he ſeized upon his Fellow-Servant for a Triſle of a Debt, a Debt of a hundred Pence only, and caſt him into Priſon, even though he had uſed the ſame pathetick Intreaties to him, that himſelf had done to the King his Maſter: Which when the King underſtood, he ſent for the ungrateful Villain, upbraided him with his Baſeneſs and Cruelty; and then, in great Rage, ordered him to Priſon, until he ſhould diſcharge the whole Debt.

Debt. *And ſo likewiſe ſhall* my *heavenly Father* (ſays our Lord in the Application) *deal with ſuch as will not forgive their Brother's Treſpaſſes from* theirs *Hearts.*

WHILE he was giving theſe Inſtructions to his Diſciples, he was interrupted by *John*, the Son of *Zebedee*, informing him of a Stranger who caſt out Devils in his Name; but becauſe he was not of their Fraternity, that he had forbidden him; which Conduct *Jeſus* by no Means could approve of, becauſe he looked upon it, as a ſure Argument, that whoever did Miracles in his Name, could be no Enemy to his Perſon.

WITH this Diſcourſe they arrived at *Capernaum*, where the Collectors of a certain Tribute for the Uſe of the Temple, came to *Peter* and aſked him, if his Maſter was accuſtomed to pay it? And when *Peter* went in to acquaint him with the Officer's Demands, *Of whom* (ſays our Lord preventing him) *do the Kings of the* Gentiles *take Tribute? Of their own Children, or of Strangers? Peter* anſwered, *Of Strangers: If ſo* (rejoined our Saviour) *then are the Children free*; meaning, that ſince the *Gentile* Kings did not exact Tribute, of their own Houſhold, this Tribute, which was paid to God for his Temple, was not due from him, who was his Son, nor from them who were his Domeſticks; however, to avoid all Occaſions of Offence, he ordered him to go and caſt an Hook into the Sea, and in the Mouth of the firſt Fiſh that he caught, he ſhould find a Piece of Money, juſt of proper Value to give to the Collectors for them: which accordingly came to paſs.

HERE let us ſtop to make ſome Remarks on what we have been relating.

THERE is ſome ſmall Difference in the ſeveral Ways, among the Apoſtles concerning their Preference in *Chriſt*'s Kingdom; St. *Matthew* tells us, that *the Diſciples came to* Jeſus, *ſaying, who is greateſt*

in

in the Kingdom of Heaven? Chap. xviii. 1. St. *Mark*, that *Chriſt* put this Queſtion to them, *and they held their Peace*, Chap. ix. 33. and St. *Luke*, that they had been diſputing this Point among themſelves, and *Jeſus, perceiving the Thoughts of their Hearts, took a Child*, &c. Ch. ix. 46, 47. Now, to reconcile this ſeeming Repugnancy, we muſt obſerve, that as our Saviour was going to *Capernaum*, his Diſciples following him, *diſcourſing among themſelves* (as St. *Mark* has it) *who of them was to be the greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*; that when they came to him into the Houſe, having ſtill the ſame ambitious Notions in their Minds, he aſked them, *What was it that you diſcourſed of in the Way?* But they being aſhamed to tell him held their Peace; and that then our Saviour, who well underſtood what the Subject of their Diſcourſe had been, endeavoured, by the Example of a Child, to cure their Diſtemper, and to inform them what Diſpoſition of Mind was proper to qualify them both for his Kingdom of Grace here, and his Kingdom of Glory hereafter. St. *Matthew*, indeed, according to our Tranſlation, repreſents the Thing, as if the Diſciples had put the Queſtion to their Maſter, *Who ſhould be greateſt in the Kingdom of Heaven*; but that the Participle *perceiving* relates not to *Jeſus*, but the Diſciples, and means not the external Speech but the inward Reaſoning of their Minds, is obvious from their Silence, which St. *Mark* takes Notice of, and our Saviour's *perceiving the Thoughts of their Hearts*, which St. *Luke* remarks: For had themſelves propounded the Queſtion to our Saviour (as the Verſion in St. *Matthew* ſeems to imply) we cannot ſee why they ſhould not anſwer his Demand, which tended to the ſame Purpoſe; nor can we imagine, why we ſhould be repreſented, as perceiving the Thoughts of their Hearts, had they already declared theſe Thoughts in plain Words.

THE *Apoſtles*, as well as other *Jews*, had imbibed the Notion (which they never got quit of, until the Deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* inſtructed them better) that the *Meſſiah* when he came upon Earth, ſhould erect a temporal Kingdom; and (as the *Jews* in general expect) that they ſhould then be conſtituted Lords over all other Nations; ſo the Apoſtles (who believed their Maſter to be the *Meſſiah*) were naturally led to think, that they ſhould have the Preference before all other *Jews*; and that ſince the King *Meſſiah* (according to the Cuſtom of other Sovereigns) was to have ſome Officers of the higheſt Rank, they made no Queſtion but that ſome of them ſhould be made choice of, though they were not ſo well agreed, who were the fitteſt or moſt deſerving of theſe high Poſts of Honour. Some of them were our Lord's Relations, and others had Parts and Endowments extraordinary; of ſome he had given high Commendations, and others he had admitted to a Participation in his moſt ſecret Retirements. Theſe Things might poſſibly raiſe ſome Emulation among them: and therefore, as out Saviour's Dominion was not of this World, he plainly tells them, that all ſuch worldly Deſires and Expectations were inconſiſtent with the ſpiritual Kingdom which he was to erect, and wherein *he who deſired to be firſt, was to be laſt of all, and Servant of all.*

SOME of the Antients are of Opinion, that the Child which *Chriſt* ſet before his Diſciples, as a Pattern of Meekneſs and Humility, was St. *Ignatius*, who was afterwards Biſhop of *Antioch*, and famous in the Chriſtian Church for his writing and dying in the Defence of the Truth. However this be, it is certain that a Child, who has no Concern for Dominion or Empire over others, who is free from all covetous Deſires of Wealth, and knows nothing of what a Poſt of Honour means, was in this Caſe a very proper Emblem of that Simplicity, Innocence and

and Humility, that our Lord requires in all his Diſciples.

THE Words in the Caution are, *Whoſo ſhall offend one of theſe little Ones, which believe in me, it were better for him that a Millſtone were hanged about his Neck, and that he were drowned in the Sea*, Matt. xviii. 6. To offend or ſcandalize, is to diſcourage Men in the Profeſſion and Practice of Religion, and by Indignities and Perſecutions, as well as by bad Examples, to occaſion their apoſtatizing from the Faith: For we can hardly imagine that ſo ſevere a Puniſhment, as is here threatned, ſhould be inflicted for a Crime of leſs Aggravation than it amounts to: *Grotius*, upon this Place, is of Opinion, that the *Milſtone about the Neck* alludes to a Cuſtom of drowning among the *Syrians*. But St. *Jerome* thinks that this Manner of Execution was in Uſe among the *Jews*; for (according to Dr. *Alix*) it was cuſtomary for them to caſt execrable Men into the *Dead-Sea*, with a Stone tied to them. 'Tis certain from *Diodorus Siculus*, and others, that among the *Greeks*, this was the antient Puniſhment for ſacrilegious Perſons; and from *Suetonius* we may learn, that for the Pride and Coveteouſneſs, wherewith ſome in publick Offices had oppreſſed the Provinces where they lived, *Auguſtus* had them caſt into the River, with great Weights about their Necks.

With Reſpect to Guardian-Angels, who were ſuppoſed too attend on true *Chriſtians*, it were too nice, perhaps, to ſay that every diſtinct Man has his diſtinct Guardian-Angel: It may be true, ſometimes, that many have but one, and it may be true at other Times, that one has many, as we find *Jacob* had at *Mahanaim*, and *Elias* at *Dothan*; but this we may ſafely affirm, that no good Man is without an Angel to inſpect his Behaviour, and to ſollicit his Well-being. To this Purpoſe *Abraham* tells his Servant, travelling to *Nahor*, *the Lord will ſend his Angel with thee, and proſper thy Way*, Gen. xxiv. 40. and *Ja-*

cob makes Mention of one who had redeemed him from all Evil, and wiſhes the ſame Protection to his Children, *Gen.* xlviii. 16. The *Pſalmiſt* gives us expreſs Teſtimony, that the *Angel of the Lord ſtandeth round about thoſe that fear him*, Pſal. xxxiv. 7. and that Paſſage, which the Devil applies to our Saviour, *he ſhall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways*, is delivered by the *Pſalmiſt* as true of every Servant of *Chriſt*, as well as of *Chriſt* himſelf, *for they are all miniſtering Spirits, ſent forth to miniſter for them, who ſhall be Heirs of Salvation.*

THE ten Thouſand Talents mentioned in the Parable of the King's calling his Servants to Account, in our Money, amount to one Million eight hundred and ſeventy-five thouſand Pounds; whereas the hundred Pence, that his Fellow-ſervant was indebted to him, was but about three Pounds two Shillings and Six-pence.

THE doctrinal Obſervation, that properly reſults from the Puniſhment of the ungrateful Debtor, mentioned in the ſame Place, is this, That our Sins once forgiven, may, by a Forfeiture of that Pardon by our future Misbehaviour, be again charged upon us; for God's Pardons in this Life are not abſolute, but conditional only: According to the Petition of our Lord's Prayer, they are anſwerable to our Dealings with others; and are likely to be no longer continued to us than we perform the Condition.

THAT the Man who, as St. *John* informed *Chriſt*, caſt out Devils in his Name, though he was not of their Number, did truely caſt them out, our Lord's Anſwer ſuppoſes, and his Diſciples ſaw with their Eyes; but then the Queſtion is, How a Perſon, who did not follow *Chriſt*, could caſt out Devils in his Name? To which it may be anſwered, *1ſt*, That this Perſon might believe in *Jeſus*, without being one of his Retinue, and follow his Doctrine, though he

he did not his Perſon. 2*dly*, He might do Miracles in the Name of *Jeſus Chriſt*, without being one of his true Diſciples, even as *Judas* is ſuppoſed to have done, and thoſe others, to whom our Lord will profeſs, *I never knew you, depart from me, ye Workers of Iniquity*, Matth. vii. 23. Or, 3*dly*, He might be a Diſciple of *John the Baptiſt*, and ſo do his Miracles in the Name of *Chriſt ſhortly to come*. But by what Means ſoever it was, that he did them, 'tis no ſmall Confirmation of the Truth of *Chriſtianity*, that our Saviour's Name was thus powerful, even among thoſe that did not follow him, and therefore were incapable of doing any Thing by way of Compact with him.

WITH Reſpect to the Tribute collected for the Uſe of the Temple, every *Jew*, that was twenty Years old, was obliged to pay annually two *Attick Drams*, or half a Shekel (about fifteen Pence, of our Money) for the *Uſe of the Sanctuary*, Exod. xxx. 13, 16. or to buy Sacrifices, and other Things neceſſary for the Service of the Temple: And that this was the Tribute which the Collectors here demanded, and not any Tax payable to the *Roman* Emperors (as ſome imagine) is evident, not only from our Saviour's Argument, *viz.* That he was the Son of the heavenly King, to whom it was paid, and conſequently had a Right to plead his Exemption; but from the *Greek* Word *Didrachma*, which (according to *Joſephus*) was the proper Word for this *Capitation Tax*, that was paid to the Temple at *Jeruſalem*; whereas the *Cæſarean* Tribute-money was the *Denarius*, a *Roman* Coin, and would have been gathered by the uſual Officers, and Publicans, and not by the Perſons, who are here ſtiled (as by a known Title) *they that received the* Didrachma.

THE Piece of Money that *Peter* was directed to take out of the Fiſh's Mouth, to pay the Tribute due for them both amounted, to four Drachms, or one Shekel; in our Money, about half a Crown:

and

and the Reaſon, why our Saviour paid for none of the Apoſtles, but St. *Peter* only, was, becauſe theſe Receivers demanded it only of thoſe, that dwelt at *Capernaum* (as our Saviour and St. *Peter* did) leaving the other Apoſtles to pay it in the ſeveral Places of their Abode.

BUT it is Time to reſume the Narrative.

ABOUT this Time the *Feaſt of Tabernacles* drew near; and ſome of our Lord's Relations (out of Vanity more than Good-will) were very earneſt with him to go up to *Jeruſalem*, at this great Concourſe of People in order to ſhew his Miracles in the Capital, which hitherto (as they ſaid) had been concealed in an obſcure Part of the World: But our Lord, for the preſent, would not yield to their Importunity, though, in a ſhort Time, he ſet forward to *Jeruſalem*, but in a very private Manner, for fear of awakening the Jealouſy of his Enemies. As he was to paſs through the Province of *Samaria*, he ſent ſome of his Apoſtles to provide him Lodgings in one of the Villages; but the Inhabitants, perceiving that he was going to *Jeruſalem* to the Feaſt, were ſo uncivil, as to refuſe him Entertainment.

THIS Indignity, put upon their Maſter, ſo exaſperated *James* and his Brother *John*, that they deſired Leave of him (in Imitation of *Elias*) to command Fire down from Heaven, to conſume ſuch inhoſpitable Wretches; but inſtead of giving any ſuch Permiſſion, our Saviour took care to inform them, that the Marks of a *Chriſtian* were Meekneſs and Love, not Fury and Revenge; that the true End and Deſign of his coming into the World *was not to deſtroy, but to ſave Mens Lives*; and that he might prove this his Doctrine by his holy Practice, when ten leprous Perſons, who came out of his Neighbourhood, where he had been ſo rudely treated, preſented themſelves with loud Cries to him for Help, his Compaſſion was ready to relieve, as their Neceſſity to aſk; for while they were going *to ſhew themſelves to the Prieſt* (as he directed them) they all

all found themſelves cured. But, ſee the great Ingratitude of human Nature! of the ten who received this miraculous Bleſſing, but one returned to give our Saviour Thanks, and he was a *Samaritan*.

HAVING thus returned Good for Evil, and the greateſt Kindneſs for the moſt palpable Affront, our Lord proceeded on his Journey, and came to another Village, where he lodged that Night; but before he arrived at *Jeruſalem* he ſent out ſeventy of his Diſciples, by two and two together, (in the ſame Manner as he had ſent his twelve Apoſtles) into thoſe Places which he himſelf, in a ſhort Time, intended to viſit, and gave them Inſtructions, much of the ſame Import, with what, upon the like Occaſion, he had given the Apoſtles.

THE *Feaſt of Tabernacles* always continued eight Days, but, for ſome Time after his Arrival, our Saviour did not appear publickly, which occaſioned no ſmall Enquiry, and various Diſcourſes concerning him; ſome ſaying, that he was a good Man, and others, an Impoſtor, who deluded the People. At length, when every one began to deſpair of ſeeing him about the Middle of the Feaſt he ſhewed himſelf openly, and went and taught in the Temple, to the great Admiration of the *Jews*, who were not a little ſurprized to find him ſo perfect in the Scriptures, whoſe Education had been deſtitute of all Learning: But, to obviate this Exception, he gave them to underſtand, that the Doctrine wherein he inſtructed them, was not of human Acquiſition, but divine Inſpiration; and that it was a very baſe and ungenerous Thing in them, to endeavour to take away the Life of one, who taught them nothing but what was agreeable to the Law of *Moſes*, whereof they made ſo loud a Profeſſion. In this Manner he preached to the People for the remaining Part of the Feaſt; and on the laſt, and greateſt Day thereof, took Occaſion from the Cuſtom of fetching Water from the Fountain of *Siloah* in great Pomp, and

pouring

pouring it upon the Altar of Burnt-offerings in great Abundance, to acquaint them with the future Effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which he intended to ſend down upon all thoſe that believed in him.

THOSE, who knew the great Hatred which the ruling Part of the Nation had conceived againſt him, admired to hear him ſpeak with ſo much Freedom and Intrepidity; and thoſe, who had ſeen the Number and Greatneſs of his Miracles, were by them convinced that he was the true *Meſſiah*; but the Prejudice of his being a *Galilean*, and not acknowledged by any of their Rulers and learned Rabbies, led others into a contrary Perſuaſion. In the Concluſion, Officers were ſent from the *Sanhedrim* to apprehend him, but they were ſo taken with his Perſon and Preaching, that they became his Diſciples; for upon their Return, they told the Council, that they could not execute their Office, becauſe *never Man ſpake like him*; ſo that the *Phariſees*, who were Part of the Aſſembly, being more inraged at their Reaſon which they gave, than the Neglect of their Duty, upbraided them for being ſo eaſily ſeduced, and for following the Error of an ignorant Mob; until *Nicodemus*, who had formerly converſed with our Lord, and was indeed a ſecret Diſciple of his ſeeing with what Violence his Enemies were bent againſt him, could not forbear interpoſing in his Behalf, by urging the Unlawfulneſs of condemning a Perſon without hearing; ſo that, after ſome Reflections thrown upon him, as a Favourer of this *Galilean*, who could have no Pretenſions (as they ſaid) to the Title of a Prophet, the Aſſembly broke up, without proceeding any farther againſt him, becauſe indeed, as yet *his Time was not fully come.*

SOME Remarks may now be thought neceſſary on the foregoing Relation.

THE Feaſt of Tabernacles, kept in Commemoration of the *Iſraelites* ſojourning in the Wilderneſs,

neſs, and living in the Tents for the Space of forty Years, was one of the three great annual Feſtivals, wherein all the Males were obliged to appear at *Jeruſalem*. It began to be celebrated on the fifteenth Day of the Month *Tizri* (which anſwers in part to our *September* and *October*) and is the firſt Month in their *civil*, and the ſeventh in their *ſacred* Year.

OUR Saviour's Words upon this Occaſion are,—*Ye go up unto this Feaſt, I go not up yet to this Feaſt, for my Time is not yet fully come*, Joh. vii. 8. Here *Grotius* takes Notice, that the *Greek* Particle which anſwers to *not yet*, was not originally in the Text becauſe (according to St *Jerom*, contra *Pelag.* lib. ii.) *Porphyry* accuſes *Chriſt* of Inconſtancy and Mutability, in ſaying, *I go not up to the Feaſt*, when afterwards he went; and therefore he very modeſtly concludes, that this Particle was added by ſome *Chriſtians*, to avoid the Force of this Objection. But why muſt *Chriſtians* be accuſed of altering the Scriptures, merely to ſave the Credit of an *Heathen*, and profeſſed Enemy to *Chriſtianity*, who might either read negligently, or meet with a deficient or corrupt *Latin* Copy? Eſpecially ſince it is certain, that St. *Chryſoſtom* reads this Particle; that the *Syriac*, and *Arabic* Verſions, the *Alexandrian*, and moſt other ancient *Manuſcripts*, have it; and that it intirely agrees with the Senſe both of the preceding and ſubſequent Words.

SAMARIA was a Province that lay between *Galilee* and *Judea*, and our Saviour's neareſt Way to *Jeruſalem* was through it. But when it may be queſtioned, why the *Samaritans*, who lived at leſs Diſtance from *Jeruſalem* than the *Galileans*, came to be more corrupted in their Religion? To which the moſt probable Anſwer is,——That when the King of *Aſſyria* had taken *Samaria*, and carried away the People captive, 2 *Kings* xvii. 6. in their Room he planted Colonies of his own Subjects, who were groſs

Idolaters; and more eſpecially in the Country of *Samaria*, properly ſo called, becauſe it was a Province which lay in the Heart of his new Conqueſt, and might therefore keep the others, that depended on it, in Subjection. Now theſe Idolaters mixing with the *Jews* that were left behind, made up a ſtrange Medley of Religion, which was not quite reformed, even in our Saviour's Time; and therefore he tells the *Samaritan* Woman at *Jacob*'s Well, *Ye worſhip ye know not what*, John iv. 22. whereas the People of *Galilee*, having few of the *Aſſyrians* planted among them, kept their Religion more pure and unmixed, and, after the Deſtruction of the Temple of *Gerizim* by *John Hyrcanus*, held conſtant Communion with the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, even though *Gabinius*, when he was Governor of *Syria*, had built the *Samaritans* another; and in Relation to this Communion it is, that our Saviour tells the ſame Woman (ſpeaking of himſelf, among the *Galileans*) *we know what we worſhip, for Salvation is of the* Jews.

THE great Multitude that accompanied our Saviour, and the little or no Proviſion that he uſually carried with him, made it neceſſary for ſome to go before to make Preparation for his Reception; and his two Apoſtles, *James* and *John*, are ſuppoſed to be the Perſons employed in this Capacity, becauſe we find them in particular reſenting the Indignity put upon their Maſter.

JOSEPHUS tells us,——That as it was an uſual Thing for the *Galileans* to travel by the Way of *Samaria* to *Jeruſalem*, upon the Celebration of their Feſtivals, one Time as they paſſed by a Village called *Nais*, under the Juriſdiction of *Samaria*, and ſituated in the *great Plain*, there happened a Quarrel between the Paſſengers and Villagers, wherein ſeveral of the *Galileans* were ſlain, and which afterwards occaſioned a Civil War between theſe two Provinces.——And as it was a common Thing for the *Samaritans*

maritans to be angry with the *Galileans* in general, for paſſing by their Temple to go to *Jeruſalem*, ſo they might much more reſent it in our Saviour, becauſe, as he was accounted a *Prophet ſent from God*, by this Action he plainly decided the Controverſy between them and the *Jews*, touching the Place which God had appointed for his religious Worſhip.

THE Hiſtory of *Elias* (to which the Apoſtles refer us) is doubtleſs that, where, by the Direction of God, he called for *Fire from Heaven* to deſtroy thoſe Captains and their Companies, whom King *Ahaziah* ſent out to apprehend him, 2 *Kings* i. 10, *&c.* And when theſe two Apoſtles deſired the like Judgment upon the Village of *Samaria*, for refuſing to receive their Maſter, they verified the Name of being *Sons of Thunder*, which upon Account of their fiery Zeal, their Maſter had before given them, *Mark* iii. 17.

WHAT the two Apoſtles had to alledge, in Behalf of their intended Severity againſt theſe *Samaritans* was, That they were Schiſmaticks, and had ſet up another Temple in Oppoſition to that at *Jeruſalem*; that they were Hereticks, and, together with the Worſhip of the God of *Iſrael*, had mixed that of *Pagan* Idols; that the Perſon, whom they had affronted had a Character much ſuperior to that of *Elias*; and that, by an exemplary Puniſhment, inflicted on this Village, they might convince the reſt of the *Samaritans* of God's Diſpleaſure againſt their Way of Worſhip, and of the divine Miſſion of their Maſter who was the true *Meſſiah*. But, notwithſtanding theſe plauſible Allegations, our Saviour rebuked them; and, in his Rebuke, gave them to underſtand, that a Spirit of Severity towards erroneous Perſons, in whomſoever it is found is highly oppoſite to the calm Temper of *Chriſtianity*, which is *pure and peaceable, gentle and eaſy to be intreated, full of Mercy and good Works*, James iii. 17,

and that it was repugnant to the End for which he came into the World, which was to diſcountenance all Fierceneſs and Rage, and furious Zeal, that occaſion ſo many Miſchiefs among Mankind, and to beget in all his Followers ſuch a Diſpoſition, as exerts itſelf in *Love*, *Peace*, *Long-ſuffering*, *Gentleneſs*, and *Meekneſs*, Gal. v. 22, 23. even to thoſe, of the moſt contrary Tempers and Perſuaſions.

BY the *Prieſts*, to whom our Saviour remits the *Lepers*, we are to underſtand the *Prieſts* at *Jeruſalem*; for we can hardly ſuppoſe, that he would ſend them to thoſe of Mount *Gerizim*; when himſelf, both in his Words and Practice, had ſufficiently declared the Illegality of their Inſtitution: And therefore, by ſending them to *Jeruſalem*, where they were to make their Offerings for their Cleanſing, *Lev.* xiv. 2, *&c.* he not only decided the Controverſy between the *Jews* and the *Samaritans*, but gave them likewiſe to underſtand, that, before they reached *Jeruſalem*, he would undoubtedly heal them.

THOSE, who would have it, that the *ſeventy* Diſciples, whom *Chriſt* ſent out, were choſen according to the Number of the *Sanhedrim*, imagine, that they were *ſeventy-two*, tho' the round Sum only be mentioned; but the general Teſtimony of the Ancients is, that they were no more than *ſeventy*. What their Names were, is a Thing unknown, only we have an uncertain Account of twenty-eight of them out of *Euſebius*, *Epiphanius*, and *Papias*, and theſe are, *Matthias*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *Barnabas*, *Stephen*, *Philip*, *Procorus*, *Nicanor*, *Timon*, *Parmenas*, *Nicholas*, *Juſtus*, *Apelles*, *Soſthenes*, *Rufus*, *Niger*, *Cephas*, *Thaddæus*, *Ariſtion*, *John*, *Barſabas*, *Andronicus*, *Junius*, *Silas*, *Lucius*, *Manaen*, *Mnaſon*, and *Ananias*. Now, whereas ſome compare the *Biſhops* to the *Apoſtles*, and theſe *ſeventy* to the *Preſbyters* of the Church, and thence conclude, that theſe two Orders in the Miniſtry, one inferior to the other, were inſtituted by *Chriſt* himſelf, there is this Difference in the Matter,

That,

That the *ſeventy* received not their Miſſion (as *Preſbyters* do) from *Biſhops*, but immediately from our Lord, as the Apoſtles did, and were ſent upon the ſame Errand, and with the ſame Powers. There is, however, I think, this Foundation for that, wherein St. *Chryſoſtom*, and others, place the Superiority of *Biſhops* over *Preſbyters*, viz. that the Power of Ordination belongs to them alone: For, tho' the Commiſſion to preach the Goſpel belonged to the *ſeventy*, as well as to the *twelve Apoſtles*, yet the Power of conferring the *Holy Ghoſt* by the Impoſition of Hands, was peculiar to the *twelve*, Acts viii. 14, *&c.* and this ſeems to be the Reaſon, why the conferring of the *Holy Ghoſt*, for the Uſe of the Miniſtry (which is done by the Impoſition of Hands) has perpetually been eſteemed peculiar to the *Biſhops*, who, in the eccleſiaſtical Stile, are always called the *Succeſſors* of the *Apoſtles*.

FROM the twenty-ninth Chapter of the Book of *Numbers* we learn, that on the firſt Day of the *Feaſt of Tabernacles*, thirteen Bullocks were to be offered; on the ſecond, twelve; on the third, eleven; on the fourth, ten; on the fifth, nine; on the ſixth, eight; on the ſeventh, ſeven; and on the eighth, or laſt, only one; ſo that, in regard to the Sacrifices, the laſt Day was the leaſt of all, and yet the *Jews* accounted it the greateſt, becauſe on that Day the King of *Iſrael* (as the *Talmudiſts* love to ſpeak) was entertained by his own People only, and not by thoſe of any other Nation. For their Tradition is, that on the firſt Day of the Feaſt, their Anceſtors (when the Temple was ſtanding) ſacrificed ſeventy Bullocks for the ſeventy Nations (for they ſuppoſe juſt ſo many) that are upon the Face of the Earth; but on the laſt Day no more than one, but that in the Name of the People of *Iſrael* only. And, as they imagine, that an earthly Prince may ſometimes (inſtead of a vaſt Entertainment) deſire but a ſmall Collation with his firſt Favourite, that they may have an Opportunity of

of ſome familiar Converſe together; ſo, upon the Account of the intimate Friendſhip with God, which the *Jews*, on that Day, thought themſelves admitted to, and the exceſſive Joy, which from the Senſe of that Friendſhip, they expreſſed in all the outward Significations of Muſick, Singing, and Dancing, the laſt Day of the Feaſt of Tabernacles was always accounted the greateſt.

IN theſe Words, *never Man ſpoke like him*, there are two Things remarkable, 1*ſt*, The Power of *Chriſt*'s Preaching to change the Frame and Temper of Men's Spirits; for theſe Men came with Hearts alienated from *Chriſt*, and with Intention to apprehend, and carry him before the Chief-prieſts, but returned with great Admiration of his Excellency and Worth. 2*dly*, The Honeſty and Integrity of theſe Men is very remarkable; for they do not return with a Pretence that they feared the Multitude, and therefore thought it dangerous to apprehend him, but ingenuouſly confeſs, that they could not prevail with themſelves to lay violent Hands upon a Perſon whoſe Diſcourſes were ſo excellent and divine.

OUR bleſſed Saviour was neither by Birth, nor by Deſcent, a *Galilean*; but, admitted he had been ſo, 'twas a falſe Aſſertion to ſay, that no Prophet ever aroſe out of *Galilee*, ſince *Nahum*, though originally of the Tribe of *Simeon* (according to the Teſtimony of St. *Jerom*, was himſelf a *Galilean*) was born in that Province and in *Elciſi*, the ſame Town which that Father came from; ſince *Jonas* was undoubtedly of *Gath-hepher*, in the Tribe of *Zebulon*, which lay in the Land of *Galilee*, 2 Kings xiv. 25. and, in the Opinion of ſeveral, *Malachi* was of the ſame Tribe, and born in the City of *Sapha*: For, as there is no Reaſon in Nature, ſo is there no Declaration of the divine Will, why a *Galilean* ſhould not be inſpired with the Gift of Prophecy, as well as any other *Jew*.

SOME

SOME are of Opinion, that the Party of *Sadducees* in the Council, who held the Rites and Traditions of the *Phariſees* in great Contempt, joined with *Nicodemus*, in not having *Chriſt* condemned without a fair Hearing, which was no more, than what the Law required, *Deut.* i. 16, 17.

THE next Part of the ſacred Story follows thus:

IN the Evening, *Jeſus* repaired to the Mount of *Olives*, about a Mile from the City, and where he ſometimes uſed to paſs the Night with his Apoſtles. Early next Morning he returned to the Temple, and, as he was teaching the People that were gathered about him, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees* brought in a Woman taken in the Act of Adultery, and deſired him to give his Judgment in the Caſe. Their Purpoſe was to find an Occaſion of accuſing him, either of aſſuming a judicial Power, if he condemned her; or of annulling the Law, if he acquitted her: But he (as if he had not much minded them) ſtooped down and wrote ſomething with his Fingure upon the Duſt, of the Pavement; till upon their importuning him for an Anſwer, he raiſed himſelf up, and ſaid, *He that is without Sin among you, let him caſt the firſt Stone*; and ſo ſtooping down, wrote as before. This unexpected Anſwer baffled theſe inſidious Accuſers; who, throughly convinced of their own Crimes, retired, one by one, and left the Woman alone; ſo that, when our Lord lift himſelf up, and found none but the Woman ſtanding by him, he aſked her, what was become of her Accuſers, and whether any one had condemned her? And, when he had underſtood, by her Anſwer, that no one had, *Neither do I condemn thee*, ſaid he, *go, and ſin no more.*

AFTER this Interruption, *Jeſus* returned to the Buſineſs of inſtructing the People, and in a ſublime Diſcourſe, opened ſeveral great Myſteries of Chriſtianity, *viz.* his divine Miſſion, his Co-equality with the Father, his Ability to give eternal Life to his Followers,

Followers, and the Neceſſity of believing in him, which would be more evident after his Crucifixion; and thence taking Occaſion to expoſe the Wickedneſs and Degeneracy of thoſe, who ſought to take away his Life, and how unlike to the Behaviour of the Sons of God and *Abraham* (whom they boaſted themſelves to be) ſuch cauſeleſs and inveterate Malice was, he ſo provoked them with his ſevere Reflections, and eſpecially with the Superiority which he claimed above *Abraham*, that they took up Stones to caſt at him, had he not miraculouſly conveyed himſelf out of their Hands.

BEFORE our Lord left *Jeruſalem*, the *ſeventy* Diſciples, whom he had ſent to preach the Goſpel, returned from their Journey and Miniſtry, greatly rejoicing, becauſe the very Devils, by Virtue of his Name, were ſubjected to them; whereupon our Lord promiſed them ſtill greater Succeſs; inveſted them with Power to tread upon the moſt venomous Beaſts, and all the malignant Inſtruments of *Satan*, without the leaſt Harm; and, and at the ſame Time, gave them Aſſurance of a Bleſſing more peculiarly theirs, *viz.* that their Names were recorded in Heaven; and ſo broke out into a Rapture of Joy, glorifying God for concealing the Myſteries of the Goſpel from the Great and Wiſe, and revealing them to the Simple and Ignorant; and to his Diſciples more eſpecially, who in, Virtue of that Revelation, enjoyed an Happineſs which many Kings and Prophets had in vain deſired.

OUR Lord had ſcarce ended his Diſcourſe, when a Doctor of the Law ſtood up, and enquired of him, what was neceſſary to be done for the Attainment of that eternal Life, which he was ſo very liberal in promiſing to his Followers. Whereupon our Lord remitted him to the Law, which, according to the Doctor's own Account, conſiſted chiefly in the Love of God, and the Love of our Neighbour. But when he demanded farther, what the Notion of a Neighbour

bour implied? Our Lord thought proper to anſwer this Queſtion by telling him,—" That, once upon a Time a certain *Jew*, as he was travelling in the Road between *Jeruſalem* and *Jericho*, was robbed, ſtripped, barbarouſly uſed and left almoſt dead with his Wounds; that by Chance a Prieſt came that Way, and ſaw the poor Wretch weltering in his Blood, but the Horror of the Sight did not affect him, he paſſed along unconcerned; that next came a *Levite*, but he too was as void of Tenderneſs and Compaſſion as was the Prieſt, though both of them were of the ſame Country with the Sufferer; that, at laſt, a *Samaritan*, a Stranger, and one abhorred by the *Jews*, ſeeing this diſtreſſed Perſon, with great Compaſſion came to him, raiſed his Head, recalled his fainting Spirits, and cloſed his gaping Wounds with the beſt Medicines he had; then, mounting him on his own Horſe, he gently conveyed him to the firſt Inn, were at his own Coſt, he entertained him while he ſtaid with him, and at his Departure, promiſed the Hoſt to be at whatever Expences more ſhould happen." From this plain Narration, the Doctor himſelf could not but conclude, that the *Samaritan* was the Neighbour to the Perſon in Diſtreſs, and conſequently, that the Notion of a Neighbour comprehended Men of all Nations, and all Religions whatever.

LET us now ſtop to take a Review of this Period of our Narration.

IT is generally agreed, that, when our Saviour ſtooped down to write with his Finger in the Duſt, he wrote ſome memorabie Sentence or other, but what that Sentence was, the Conjectures of learned Men had been various. Some have imagined, that it was the Reproof againſt a rigid and uncharitable Temper, which occurs in his Sermon on the Mount, *Why beholdeſt thou the Mote that is in thy Brother's Eye, but conſidereſt not the Beam that is in thine own Eye?* Matth. vii. 3. others, that it

was the very Words, which, upon his raiſing himſelf up, he pronounced to the Woman's Accuſers, *He, that is without Sin among you, let him firſt caſt a Stone at her*, John viii. 7. and others again, that it might rather be that Paſſage in the Pſalmiſt, *Unto the Ungodly ſaith God, Why doſt thou preach my Laws, and takeſt my Covenant in thy Mouth? Whereas thou hateſt to be reformed, and haſt caſt my Words behind thee. When thou ſaweſt a Thief thou conſentedſt unto him, and haſt been Prataker with the Adulterers*, Pſal. l. 16, *&c.* But all this is mere Gueſs-work: And it ſeems more prudent to ſay nothing of the Actions of our Saviour, when we are not admitted to the Reaſons of them.

THE *Rabbinical* Writers tell us, that, when a Man or Woman was convicted of Adultery, they were led out to the Brow of an Hill, with their Hands tied behind their Backs, where their Accuſers puſhed them down headlong; that, if with the Fall they were killed, there was no more done to them; but if they were ſtill alive, the ſame Accuſers were to roll great Stones upon them, and if theſe did not diſpatch them the Company then all took up Stones, and quite overwhelmed them with them. But we have nothing of all this in the Law of *Moſes*. In all the Places where he makes Mention of the Puniſhment, we only find, that the Criminal was to be led out of the City *and ſtoned with Stones till he died*, and that, *the Hands of the Witneſſes ſhould be firſt upon him, to put him to Death, and afterwards the Hands of all the People*, Deut. xvii. 7. 'Tis in Alluſion to this Paſſage that our Saviour ſays, *Let him, that is without Sin among you caſt the firſt Stone*, becauſe it badly becomes theſe, who are guilty, either, of the ſame, or greater Crimes, to be ſo zealous for the Puniſhment of others. This however hinders not, but that Magiſtrates, who are intruſted with the Execution of the Laws, ſhould put them in Force againſt Malefactors, even though themſelves are not intirely exempt from Sin; but ſtill

ſtill it reminds them, that they ſhould execute Judgment with Compaſſion and Tenderneſs, and as much Moderation as the Law will allow them; conſidering that they themſelves are not free from Guilt, but as obnoxious to Puniſhment for other Sins, as thoſe poor Creatures are, who have fallen into Crimes that are puniſhable by human Judicatures.

IN the very next Words it is ſaid, that the Woman *ſtood in the Midſt of the People*, and our Lord's Apoſtles, who were conſtant Attendants, were doubtleſs not far from him; the Meaning therefore of the Expreſſion muſt be, that ſhe was left without any of of her Accuſers, who of Shame, ſneaked away, being convicted in their Conſciences, that, whatever the Woman was, they were no proper Evidences againſt her: Nor is it to be wondered, that upon this Occaſion, all the Woman's Accuſers departed from her, ſince the *Jews* themſelves own, that Adulteries did *multiply under the ſecond Temple*, when their *Rabbins* came to permit every one *to have four or five Wives, and ſaid, that they ſinned not, if, after the Example of the Patriarchs, when they ſaw a beautiful Woman, they deſired to have her.*

BOTH *Selden* and *Fagius* are of Opinion, that this Woman might come under the Number of them, whoſe Caſe is thus repreſented in the Words of *Deuteronomy. If a Damſel, that is a Virgin, be betrothed to an Huſband, and a Man find her in the City, and he lie with her, then ye ſhall bring them both out unto the Gate of the City, and ye ſhall ſtone them with Stones, that they die; the Damſel, becauſe ſhe cried not, being in the City; and the Man, becauſe he hath humbled his Neighbour's Wife*, Deut. xxii. 23, 24. The Puniſhment of *ſtoning*, which this Law mentions, and the Accuſers of this Woman here inſiſt on, ſeem to favour his Notion; and the Indulgence which our Saviour ſhewed her, looks as if ſhe had ſuffered ſome Kind of Violence, though ſhe was not intirely innocent. Our Saviour however could not act in the

Capacity of a Judge, becauſe that was no Part of his preſent Miniſtry: Though therefore he was ſo far from approving her Conduct, that he ſufficiently blamed her, in biding her *ſin no more*, yet was he reſtrained from pronouncing any Sentence of Condemnation upon her, becauſe the End of his Coming at this Time into the World was *not to judge the World, but to ſave it*, John xii. 47.

THE Power, which our Saviour gave to the *Seventy*, when he ſent them out to preach the Goſpel, was only that of *healing the Sick* wherever they went, *Luke* x. 9. but finding that, upon naming their Maſter's Name, they were, able likewiſe to cure thoſe that were poſſeſſed of Devils, this they made the greater Matter of their Joy, and, at their Return, told it with more Pleaſure, becauſe it was no Part of their Commiſſion. It is to be obſerved, however, that our Lord himſelf caſt out Devils by a divine Power reſiding in himſelf; his Diſciples only in Virtue of his Name, or by a Power derived from him. Seeing then that this Power accompanied them in all Parts of the World, 'twas neceſſary that *Chriſt*'s Preſence ſhould be with them every-where, and ſuch a Preſence was a certain Proof of his being God.

OUR Saviour's Promiſe that they ſhould tread on venomous Beaſts without Hurt, ſeems to have a plain Alluſion to thoſe in the *Pſalmiſt*, where, under the Metaphor of *treadiug on the Scorpion and Baſiliſk*, Pſal. xci. 13. God promiſes the good Man a more than common Protection from all Sorts of Dangers and Enemies. But there is no Reaſon however, I think, why our Saviour's Words may not here be taken in a literal Senſe, ſince they agree ſo well with what he promiſes all true Believers in another Place, *they ſhall take up Serpents* (as we find one faſtened upon St. *Paul*'s Hand without doing him any Harm, *Acts* xxviii. 3.) *and if they drink any deadly Thing, it ſhall not hurt them*, Mark xvi. 18.

THE

THE Words, that *their Names were written in Heaven*, allude to a known Cuſtom in well-governed Cities, where Regiſters are kept of the Names of their Inhabitants, and do plainly denote the Title, which Believers have to eternal Happineſs; but by no Means an abſolute Election to it. For, as a Citizen, when he miſbehaves egregiouſly, and thereupon becomes infamous, has his Name razed out of the City-Regiſter, and is himſelf diſinfranched of all his Privileges; ſo we read of ſome, whom *Chriſt* threatens *to blot their Names out of the Book of Life*, Revel. xxii. 19. For, *as Men are written in this Book* (ſays St. *Baſil* on *Iſaiah* iv. 3.) *when they are converted from Vice to Virtue, ſo they are blotted out of it, when they backſlide from Virtue to Vice.* Of the *Twelve* we read that one was certainly a Reprobate, and tho' it becomes us to hope better of the *Seventy*, yet our Saviour's Words gives us no Room to think, that they were all predeſtinated to eternal Life, ſince his only Meaning is, That he had called, choſen, and ſeparated them, from great Numbers that would periſh; that he had given them the Grace of Faith and Admiſſion to the *Chriſtian* Covenant, but that, on themſelves it was incumbent, by the Preſervation of their Faith, and the Practice of good Works, comporting therewith, *to make their Calling and Election ſure.*

THE Law of *Moſes* does no-where expreſly promiſe eternal Life to thoſe, that obſerved its Precepts. It is wholly taken up with temporal Bleſſings and Proſperities; and yet the Generality of the *Jews* were not deſtitute of the Hopes of another Life; for their Writers, a little before, and after the Captivity, are very full of it, ſo that it became the prevailing Opinion of the whole Nation, and was received by their two principal Sects, the *Phariſees* and *Eſſenes*; as for the *Sadducees*, who had other Notions of the Matter, their Religion was very little, and their Principles purely *Epicurean.*

IN our Saviour's Time, the *Phariſees* had reſtrained the Word *Neighbour* to ſignify thoſe of their own Nation,

Nation, their own Religion, and their own Friends only; and all who differed from them in any of these Reſpects, they indulged the People the Liberty to hate, nor would they permit them to extend the leaſt Office of common Civility to any ſuch. But our Saviour overthrew theſe falſe Maxims of the *Jewiſh* Doctors, and reduced the Precept of univerſal Charity to its firſt Intention, when, in this Parable of the *Jew* and the *Samaritan*, he plainly demonſtrated that no Difference of Nation or Religion, no Quarrel or Reſentment, no Enmity or Alienation of Affections, can exempt us ſtom owning any Perſon to be our Neighbour.

BETWEEN *Jeruſalem* and *Jericho* (which were about ſeven Leagues diſtant) the Road was very infamous for Murders and Robberies, for in it was a Place called the Valley of *Adommim*, or of *bloody Men*, becauſe of the great Quantity of Blood that was there ſpilt; and for this Reaſon it is, that our Lord lays the Scene of his Parable in this Place.

To make the Deſcription more lively, our Saviour inſtances in two Men, a *Prieſt* and a *Levite*, who took no Pity of this *Jew* in Diſtreſs, though they were of the ſame Religion and Country; nay, though they were Miniſters and Teachers of the Religion which he profeſſed; and might therefore be preſumed, even in Virtue of their Office and Education, to have more extenſive Notions, and Hearts more capable of tender Impreſſions, than the ruder Vulgar; and, for the ſame Reaſon, he introduces a *Samaritan*, as acting a different Part, and taking all imaginable Care of this wounded *Jew*, though between the *Jews* and *Samaritans* there was a moſt inveterate Hatred.

THE Words in the Text are, *pouring in Wine and Oil*; Oil, to eaſe and aſſuage the Pain; and Wine, to cleanſe and heal the Wound: And theſe Things the good *Samaritan* had about him, becauſe the Inns in the *Eaſtern* Countries (even as it is ſtill) afforded nothing

nothing but barely Houſe-room; and therefore the Cuſtom was, for the Traveller to carry all Kinds of Neceſſaries, both for his Bed and Board, along with him.

THE Words in the Text are, *When he departed he took out two Pence*, Luke x. 35. The *Greek* Word which we render a *Penny*, was a kind of *Roman* Coin, much about *ſeven Pence Half-penny* in our Money. In the *New Teſtament* (for it never occurs in the *Old*) it is uſually put for a Piece of Money in general, *i. e.* for a *Shekel*, which was the moſt common Coin among the *Jews*, before they became ſubject to the *Greeks* and *Romans*; ſo that, in this Senſe, what the *Samaritans* gave the Hoſt amounted to *five Shillings*, or thereabout, which is more conſiſtent with the reſt of his Character, than that he ſhould leave ſo ſmall a Matter behind him.

HAD our Saviour propounded the Parable in this Manner,——That a certain *Samaritan* fell among Thieves, and that a *Prieſt* and a *Levite* paſſed by without offering him any Help, this Doctor of the Law might have replied, that he did nothing but right, becauſe the *Samaritan* was no Neighbour of theirs: But now, as he makes a *Jew* the Subject of the Parable, and the Object of the *Samaritan*'s Compaſſion, he draws him to acknowledge the Voice of Nature, which declares that every Man is Neighbour to his Fellow-Creature, and that the Law of *Moſes* has not annulled, but perfected the *Law of Nature*, by commanding us to *love our Neighbour as ourſelves*, Levit. xix. 18.

WE now go on with our Story thus:

As ſoon as the *Feaſt of Tabernacles* was ended, our Lord departed from *Jeruſalem*, and, in the Beginning of his Journey, went to a ſmall Village called *Bethany*, about two Miles *Eaſt* of *Jeruſalem*, where he was joyfully received by a Woman named *Martha*, who, with her Siſter *Mary* and her Brother *Lazarus*, was highly in Favour with him.

While

While *Martha* was buſy in making Preparation for his Entertainment, her Siſter *Mary* ſat with the Company, liſtening to his Inſtructions; and when *Martha* complained to him, that her Siſter had left the whole Burden of the Buſineſs upon her, and thereupon deſired him to ſend her to her Aſſiſtance, our Lord commended *Mary*'s Choice; and, though he did not ſlight *Martha*'s Civility, yet her Siſter's Devoutneſs and Attention to his Doctrine (which was the one Thing chiefly neceſſary) he preferred before it.

UPON his Return to *Galilee*, as he was one Day praying with his Diſciples in a private Place, they, taking it into Conſideration, how neceſſary it was for them to be directed in the right Performance of that Duty, deſired of him to compoſe a Form of Prayer for their Uſe, as the *Baptiſt* had done for his Diſciples: Whereupon he not only gave them the ſame excellent Form (called the *Lord's Prayer*) which he had given above eighteen Months before in his Sermon on the Mount, but encouraged them likewiſe, from the Conſideration of God's Goodneſs and fatherly Affection (far more indulgent to his Children than any earthly Parents were to theirs) to be conſtant in their Petitions to him, with Fervour, Importunity, and an indefatigable Perſeverance, as the likelieſt Way to obtain a gracious Anſwer to them.

NOT long after this, upon our Lord's curing a *Demoniac*, that was dumb, the *Phariſees* renewed their old diabolical Cavil, of his ejecting Devils by *Beelzebub*, which he confuted by the ſame Arguments he had formerly uſed upon that Account; and when they again demanded of him a Sign from Heaven, he again made the ſame Reply: Nay, not only ſo, but when he was invited to Dinner, one Day, by a certain Perſon of that Sect, who was not a little offended at his ſitting down at Meat without waſhing his Hands, he took Occaſion from thence to inveigh very

very ſeverely againſt ridiculous Superſtition, in affecting outward Neatneſs in their Manner of Living, while they neglected to cleanſe their Souls from internal Pollutions. And ſo, proceeding to reproach both them, and the Scribes, and Teachers of the Law, with their Pride and Prevarication, their Hypocriſy and Spirit of Perſecution, he ſo exaſperated them, that they uſed all poſſible Methods to enſnare him in his Speech, and to find ſome Accuſation againſt him, whereby they might deſtroy him.

ONE of the Company, however, ſeeing with what Authority he reproved, and determined among the People, deſired of him to arbitrate between him and his Brother, concerning an Eſtate which had lately fallen to them: But this Office he choſe to decline, and thence took Occaſion to preach againſt Covetouſneſs, or placing our Felicity in worldly Poſſeſſions; and, to enforce this, he propounded the Parable of a certain rich Man, who, when he had acquired Eſtate enough, propoſed to indulge himſelf in Voluptuouſneſs, but was diſappointed by the Intervention of a ſudden Death: He therefore exhorteth his Diſciples not to be too anxious about the Things of this Life, but to caſt their Care upon God's Providence, who, having promiſed them a Kingdom in Heaven, would not fail of ſupplying them with what was neceſſary here. He exhorteth them alſo to Charity, to Watchfulneſs, to Preparation againſt the Day of Judgment, at the Arreſt of Death, and (under the Emblem of Stewards or Governors in great Mens Houſes) recommended Gentleneſs and Temperance, and cautioned them againſt indulging themſelves in any Kind of Exceſs, upon the Confidence of their Lord's Abſence or Delay.

WHILE he was thus diſcourſing to his Diſciples, News was brought him of the Maſſacre, which *Pilate* had cauſed to be made of ſome *Galileans* while they were offering their Sacrifices at the Altar; and the Conſequence which he drew from thence (as well as

from another ſad Accident, that had lately happened in *Jeruſalem*, where the Fall of the Tower of *Siloam* had deſtroyed no leſs than eighteen Perſons) was, not that theſe Sufferers were greater Sinners than their Neighbours, but that their Sufferings were intended to lead others to Repentance, which if they did not, in all Probability they would meet with the like or worſe Judgments: And then to engage them all to a ſpeedy Repentance; he ſet forth the Patience of the Almighty towards them, in the Parable of a Fig-tree, which the Maſter of the Vineyard ordered to be cut down, becauſe, for three Years, it had born no Fruit; but the Gardener promiſing to uſe a more than ordinary Care and Diligence about it, prevailed with him to let it ſtand one Year longer, however, with this Determination, that, if it ſtill continued unfruitful he would then deſtroy it.

A few Obſervations on the foregoing Paſſages are here neceſſary.

INTERPRETERS have given themſelves ſome Trouble in determining what that *one Thing* is, which our Saviour accounts *needful*. Some of the Ancients are of Opinion, that our Lord, in this Expreſſion, told *Martha*, that *one Diſh was enough*. But, beſides the Lowneſs of the Senſe, the great Company that attended our Lord, ſeventy Diſciples, and twelve Apoſtles, to be ſure, if no more, ſhews the Incongruouſneſs of this. Others will have this *one Thing needful* to be a Life of Meditation and Contemplation, which *Mary* had all along addicted herſelf to; but her chooſing to take the Advantage of our Saviour's Company, to hear him for an Hour or two, rather than prepare a Supper for him, is not Foundation enough for this Conjecture; and therefore we cannot but think, that the moſt general Interpretation, concerning *the Care of the Soul, with Reference to Eternity*, is the beſt.

THE Practice among the *Jews*, of referring *civil* Matters to *eccleſiaſtical* Perſons, as Judges, began in the

the Captivity of *Babylon*, when, by this Means, the *Jews* avoided the bringing their Differences before *Heathen* Judges. Under the Dominion of the *Romans* they were indulged a greater Liberty, and had civil Courts made up of Perſons of their own Religion. In Caſes of private Difference between Man and Man, it was uſual to make either the Conſiſtory of three, or ſome others, choſen by the contending Parties, Arbitrators. Whether both theſe Brothers had agreed to refer their Difference to our Lord's Determination, or this *one* of them only deſired him to interpoſe his Authority, and to injoin, at leaſt to perſuade his Brother to come to an Accommodation, 'tis difficult to ſay, becauſe the Scripture is ſilent: But this may be obſerved, that the ordinary Rule of Inheritance among the *Jews* was, for the eldeſt Son to have a double Portion of his Father's Eſtate, and the reſt to be divided equally among the other Children; but, in what came by the Mother, the eldeſt had no Prerogative above the reſt, the Diviſion among them was equal. Whatever then the Controverſy between theſe Brothers was, our Saviour might very juſtly refuſe to intermeddle in it, and that, not only becauſe it was inconſiſtent with his Deſign of coming into the World, which was to promote Mens ſpiritual, rather than their temporal Intereſts, but becauſe it might probably have drawn upon him the Envy and Calumny of the *Jewiſh* Rulers, who might be apt to ſay, that he took upon him an Office, to which he had no Call, in Prejudice to them who were legally appointed to it.

THE general Opinion is, that the Maſſacre which *Pilate* had cauſed of ſome *Galileans*, relates to the Sedition which *Judas Gaulonites* raiſed againſt the *Roman* Government in *Judea*, when he, and one *Sadducus*, a *Phariſee*, poſſeſſed the People with a Notion, "That Taxes were a Badge of their Slavery; "that they ought to acknowledge no Sovereign, but "God himſelf; nor pay any Tribute, but to his

" Temple." 'Twas in *Galilee*, very probably, where this *Judas* firſt broached theſe Sentiments, and there acquired ſuch a Multitude of Followers and Abettors, as made *Joſephus* call him *Galileus*, as well as *Gaulonites*. Nay, all his Followers in general, though they were of different Provinces by Birth obtained the ſame Name. But when they came to *Jeruſalem*, at one of the great Feſtivals, and began to ſpread theſe ſeditious Notions againſt *Cæſar*, *Pilate*, who was then the *Roman* Governor, having had Intelligence of it, cauſed a conſiderable Number of them to be ſlain in the Temple, while they were ſacrificing.

THE Fountain of *Siloam* roſe at the Foot of the Wall of the Eaſt Part of the City of *Jeruſalem*. The Tower, called after its Name, was doubtleſs built upon the Wall, not far from it; and, being now become antient, might fall upon ſuch a Number of People, either paſſing by or ſtanding under it. But how this Accident came to paſs we have no Manner of Certainty, becauſe this Paſſage in St. *Luke* is the only Place where we find any Mention made of this Piece of Hiſtory.

To verify the Prediction of our Saviour upon the impenitent *Jews*, that the like or worſe Judgments ſhould befal them, we may remember what *Joſephus* has told us of them, *viz.* that, under the Government of *Cumanus*, twenty Thouſand of them were deſtroyed about the Temple: That, upon the Admiſſion of the *Idumæans* into the City, eight Thouſand and five hundred of the High-prieſt's Party were ſlain, inſomuch that there was a Flood of Blood quite round the Temple: That, upon the threefold Faction that happened in *Jeruſalem*, before the Siege of the *Romans*, the Temple was every where polluted with Slaughter; the Prieſts were ſlain in the Exerciſe of their Function; many, who came to worſhip, fell before their Sacrifices; and the dead Bodies of Strangers and Natives were promiſcuouſly blended together, and ſprinkled the Altar with their Blood; and that, upon the *Romans* taking the City and Temple,

Temple, Mountains of Dead Bodies were piled up about the Altar; Streams of Blood ran down the Steps of the Temple; ſeveral were deſtroyed by the Fall of Towers; and others choaked in the ſultry Ruins of the Galleries over the Porches.

SOME of the Ancients are of Opinion, that, by the three Years Unfruitfulneſs of the Fig-Tree, we are to underſtand the three Diſpenſations under which Mankind have lived, *viz.* under the *natural* Law, from the Beginning of the World, to the Time of *Moſes*; under the *written* Law, from *Moſes* to *Jeſus Chriſt*; and under the *evangelical* Law, from *Jeſus Chriſt* to the End of the World. Others rather mean by them the three Kinds of Government under which the *Jews* had lived, *viz.* the Government of *Judges*, from *Joſhua* to *Saul*; the Government of *Kings*, from *Saul* to the *Babyloniſh* Captivity; and the Government of *High-Prieſts*, from the Captivity to the Time of *Jeſus Chriſt*. But theſe Explications are a little too arbitrary; nor will the three Years of our Saviour's Preaching among the *Jews* come up to the Point, becauſe the *Jews* were not deſtroyed the next Year (as the barren Fig-tree was to be cut down) but forty Years after our Lord's Aſcenſion. All that is meant by the Expreſſion therefore is, that God gave them all the Time, and all the Means, that could be deſired, to make them inexcuſable; and the Term of three Years ſeems rather to be mentioned, becauſe the Fruit of ſome Fig-trees come not to Maturity, till the third Year.

BUT to reſume the Thread of our Story. Every Sabbath-day our Lord's Cuſtom was to preach in one of the *Synagogues*; and while he was thus employed, he obſerved a Woman, who, for the Space of eighteen Years, had laboured under a Spirit of Infirmity, which bowed down her Body ſo, that ſhe was not able to lift herſelf up. Here was a proper Object for his Compaſſion and Power to exert themſelves; and therefore calling the Woman to him, he laid his Hands

Hands upon her, and immediately ſhe became ſtrait, and glorified God. At this the Ruler of the *Synagogue* became ſo very envious and diſpleaſed, that he told the People, There were ſix Days in the Week allowed by God for Labour, and that on thoſe they might come for Cure, but not on the Sabbath, which was a Day appointed for Reſt. But our Lord ſoon made him aſhamed of his Hypocriſy, by an Argument drawn from their own Practice of looſing an Ox or an Aſs from the Stall, on the Sabbath-day, and leading them away to watering; and much more then might he be permitted to cure, on that Day, a Daughter of *Abraham*, whom *Satan*, for ſo many Years, had afflicted with a ſore Diſeaſe. Whereupon his Adverſaries were ſilenced; but the People were all glad and rejoiced at his glorious Actions.

THE Feaſt of Dedication was approaching, when, after ſeveral Removals, our Lord repaired again to *Jeruſalem*, and, as he was walking in the Streets, on the Sabbath-Day, he ſaw a poor Man that was blind from his very Birth. Upon his calling the Man to him, his Diſciples aſked him, whether it was the Man's own, or his Parents Sin, that had brought that Calamity upon him? But his Blindneſs, as he told them, was not ſent for a Puniſhment of any one's Sin, but for the greater Manifeſtation of God's Glory; and ſo ſpitting upon the Ground, he made ſome Clay, and having anointed his Eyes therewith, he ſent him to waſh them in the Pool of *Siloam*; which accordingly he did, and returned with ſuch perfect Eye-ſight, that his Neighbours were amazed, and began to queſtion whether he was the ſame Man, that uſed to ſit begging, until he aſſured them, that he was the very Perſon, and to ſatisfy them farther, not only told who his Phyſician was, but in what Manner his Cure was effected.

VARIOUS were the Cenſures and Opinions of Men upon this Occaſion. The *Phariſees*, to diminiſh the Credit

Credit of the Miracle, ſaid, that *Jeſus* could not be a Prophet ſent from God, becauſe he violated the Sabbath; but others again replied, that no Impoſtor could be permitted to work ſuch Miracles, as had apparently the Finger of God in them. Thoſe who were averſe to believe the Miracle, or in Hopes of making the Thing look intricate, ſent for the Parents of the Man that was cured, and aſked them theſe three Queſtions. Whether he was their Son? Whether he was born blind? And whether they knew how, and by whom he was cured? To the two firſt Queſtions they anſwered directly, that he was their Son, and was born blind; but as to the laſt, they referred them to him, who (as they told them) was of Age to anſwer for himſelf; not daring to ſay any more for Fear of the *Sanhedrim*, who had made an Order to excommunicate any Perſon who ſhould acknowledge *Jeſus* to be *Chriſt*. Him therefore they began to examine; and to draw him from the good Opinion he had conceived of his Phyſician, bid him aſcribe the Glory of his Cure wholly to God, and not to look upon *Jeſus* with any Veneration, who was a Sinner and Sabbath-breaker, and conſequently could not come from God. To which the Man boldly replied, "That it was very unaccountable, that they ſhould not perceive from whence "the Man was, whom God had endued with ſuch "a miraculous Power of opening the Eyes of one "blind, a Thing that was never heard of before, "ſince the World began; and that, ſince it was a "certain Truth, that God heareth not Sinners, if he "were not ſent and impowered by God, he could "never do ſuch wonderful Cures as theſe." This provoked them ſo highly, that they firſt upbraided him with his former Blindneſs, as a Character of ſome extraordinary Ill in him, and then caſt him out of the *Synagogue* with Diſgrace: But *Jeſus* ſhortly after met him, and received him into his Church: For he declared to him, that he was the *Meſſiah*; and the

poor

poor Man believing on him, immediately fell down proſtrate at his Feet, and adored him.

AFTER that our Lord had received the poor Man's Homage, he continued his Diſcourſe, and under the Allegory of a Shepherd and his Sheep, proved the *Phariſees* to be no better than blind Guides, nay, than Thieves and Robbers, who had climbed up into the Sheepfold, or made themſelves Rulers and Governors in God's Church, without any proper Commiſſion from him. Upon the ſame Ground he condemned all thoſe falſe *Chriſts*, who before him had uſurped to the Title of the *Meſſiah*, and aſſerted his own Right by Argument, that no other Shepherd durſt produce, *viz. his laying down his Life for his Sheep*; which were to conſiſt of *Gentiles* as well as *Jews*, and all together make up one Flock.

LET us here explain and illuſtrate what we have now advanced.

IN every Synagogue there was a conſiderable Number of Doctors of the Law, who, in the Goſpel are frequently called Rulers or Governors, and over theſe there was uſually one chief Preſident. But the Perſon here ſeems not to have been the chief Preſident, but one of the ſubordinate Rulers, becauſe we find him not addreſſing himſelf directly to *Chriſt*, (which, not improbably, had he been the Preſident, he would have taken Courage to do) but only to the People in general, though by them he only obliquely ſtruck at our Saviour.

OUR Saviour declared this Ruler of the Synagogue to be a Hypocrite, partly, becauſe he placed his Holineſs in the Obſervation of the ritual Precepts of the Law (ſuch as bodily Reſt on the Sabbath-day) to the Diſparagement of the Works of Mercy and other great Matters of eternal Obligations; and partly, becauſe he pretended to a great Zeal for the Performance of God's Commands, when all the while, he was rather actuated by a malevolent

Envy

Envy to the Glory of *Chriſt*, which he, to whom his Heart was open, perfectly knew.

WHEN *Judas Maccabæus* had cleanſed the Temple, which had been polluted by *Antiochus Epiphanes* he again dedicated the Altar; and this is ſuppoſed to be the Dedication, in Memory of which the *Jews* continued to celebrate a Feaſt which fell out in the Winter in the Month *Caſlen*, between the thirteenth and fourteenth of *November*; and being the ſame, in all Probability, with what in the Goſpel is called *Ta Egkainia*, was honoured and approved by our Saviour's Preſence, though but of human Inſtitution.

IT has been obſerved before, that our Saviour made choice of the Sabbath-day, as a Day, wherein he did many of his mighty Works. It was on this Day that he cured the impotent Man, who lay at the Pool of *Bethesda*, *John* v. 10. On this Day that he had healed him who had the withered Hand, *Matt.* xii. 10. and now on this Day likewiſe, that he gave Sight to the Man that was born blind, *John* ix. 14. and poſſibly he might chuſe this, becauſe it was the Day whereon he ordinarily preached that heavenly Doctrine, which he confirmed by theſe miraculous Works; or perhaps, that he might inſtruct the *Jews* (if they would have received Inſtruction) in the right Obſervation of the Sabbath, and arm his Diſciples againſt that pernicious Doctrine of the *Phariſees*, *viz.* that it was not lawful to do Good, or to perform Works of Mercy and Compaſſion, on that Day.

WHAT the Diſciples might mean by the Sin of the blind Man's Parents is no hard Matter to ſolve, conſidering the ſtrict Prohibition in the Law, *Levit.* xx. 18. of not coming near a menſtruous Woman, which was thought to have ſo ill Influence upon the Child, as to make it obnoxious to Leproſy or Mutilation, and might conſequently be the Cauſe of this Perſon's Blindneſs: But what we are to underſtand by his own Sin, before he was born, is not ſo eaſy

to be determined. That it cannot relate to the original Sin, which he brought into the World with him, is evident, becauſe all Mankind (our Lord excepted) are equally guilty of this; nor does this entail upon them any corporeal Imperfection: And therefore the Sin here intended, muſt be ſomething ſpecial and perſonal. Now, whoever conſiders that the Opinion of the *Platoniſts* and *Pythagoreans*, concerning the Pre-exiſtence of Souls, their Tranſmigration from one Body to another, and being ſent into Bodies better or worſe, according to their Merit or Demerit, had obtained among the *Jews*, and more eſpecially among the *Phariſees*, need not much wonder to find our Lord's Diſciples infected with it, or at leaſt deſirous to know their Maſter's Sentiments about it. The Author of the *Book of Wiſdom*, where, ſpeaking of himſelf, he tells us, *that, being good, he came into a Body undefiled*, i. e. free from any notable Infirmity, Chap. viii. 20. gives Countenance to this Doctrine; and in the Writings of *Philo* and of *Joſephus* we have it confirmed to us: And therefore the Diſciples may well be ſuppoſed to enquire here, whether our Lord allowed of the Prevailing Notion, *viz.* That the Soul of this Man might be put into this imperfect Body, for the Puniſhment of what he had done, either in or out of the Body, in a pre-exiſtent State.

IT muſt not be thought, that God did any ways actively occur to make this Man blind, though in his Wiſdom, he thought fit to leave this Imperfection in the plaſtick Matter, whereof he was formed, unrectified, that thereby he might ſhew by his miraculous Cure, a powerful Motive to believe.

WE read of nothing medicinal in this Water of *Siloam*, only our Lord was pleaſed to ſend the blind Man to waſh his Eyes there, as a Probation of his Faith and Obedience; in the ſame Manner as of old, *Naaman* the *Syrian* was ſent to waſh in the River *Jordan*.

OUR Saviour's healing the blind Man on the Sabbath-

Sabbath-day, occasioned the *Pharisees* to say, that *Jesus* could not be a Prophet sent from God, because he violated the Sabbath: And yet they themselves acknowledge, that a Prophet might do, and command Things contrary to the Rest required by the Sabbath, which they also prove by the Example of *Joshua*, who commanded, that *the Ark should be carried round* Jericho, *the armed Men going before, and after it, seven Days*, one of which must be, the Sabbath, *Josh.* vi. How then could that, which Prophets, by the known Principles of the *Jews*, were allowed to do, prove that *Jesus* was no Prophet, especially if we consider, that by these Actions of Mercy and Goodness he did not indeed violate the Rest of the Sabbath, but only their corrupt Traditions concerning it.

THE general Opinion is, that among the *Jews* there were three Kinds of Excommunication; that the first was called *Niddui*, that is to say, *Separation*, which lasted for thirty Days, and separated the Person from the Use of all Things holy: The second was called *Cherem* or *Execration*, which excluded the Person from the *Synagogue*, and deprived him of all civil Commerce: And the third *Shammatha*, or *Excision*, which removed him from all Hopes of returning to the *Synagogue* any more. But *Selden* maintains, that these three Terms *Niddui*, *Cherem* and *Sammatha*, are oftentimes synonymous, and that the *Jews*, properly speaking, never had more than two Sorts of Excommunication, the greater and the less; though most are agreed, that it was the greater Sort of Excommunication, which the *Sanhedrim* threatened to any one that should confess that *Jesus* was the *Christ*; because the Parents of the blind Man were so fearful of it, that they durst not speak out.

THEY who lose their Sight by a Disease, may be cured; but no Man, no not *Moses*, or any of the Prophets, ever did, or ever could, without the

Affiſtance of a divine Power, give Sight to one born blind; for which Reaſon the *Jews* reckon this among the Signs of the *Meſſiah*, that he ſhould open the Eyes of the Blind.

BUT *doth not God hear Sinners?* (according to the Saying of the blind Man) Then whom can he hear, ſince no Man liveth, and committeth not Sin againſt God? 'Tis true, indeed: But then the Sinners, which the poor Man may be ſuppoſed here to mean, are not thoſe who become ſuch through Ignorance, Weakneſs, or human Infirmity, but ſuch notorious and preſumptuous Sinners, as go on in their Impieties, with an high Hand, and an hardened Heart, of whom the Spirit of God declares; *when they ſpread forth their Hands, I will hide myſelf from them; and when they make many Prayers I will not hear*, Iſa. i. 15. The Maxim, however, is here to be underſtood, not in a general, but a reſtrained Senſe, *viz.* that God uſeth not to honour notorious and flagitious Sinners (eſpecially when they pretend to come with a Meſſage from him) by giving them a Power to work Miracles, in order to confirm the Truth of what they ſay. For this is the Force of the poor Man's Argument, That *Chriſt* could not be ſuch a notorious Sinner, as he was repreſented to him; becauſe it was inconſiſtent with the Attributes of God, to honour ſuch Perſons with his Preſence and Aſſiſtance, in doing ſuch Works as one could do, without a divine Power committed to them.

THAT the Alluſion of a Shephered was very proper and pertinent, with regard to the Perſons to whom our Saviour addreſſed his Diſcourſe, the Condition and Cuſtom of that Country may convince us. For the greateſt Part of the Wealth and Improvement there conſiſted in Sheep; and the Examples of *Jacob* and *David*, in particular, are Proofs, that the keeping of theſe was not uſually committed to Servants and Strangers, (as it is among us) but to Men of the greateſt Quality, and Subſtance. The Children of

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the Family, nay, the Maſters and Owners themſelves made it their Buſineſs; and eſteemed the looking to their Flocks a Care and Employment, in no wiſe below them. Hence, probably, came the frequent Metaphor of ſtiling Kings the Shepherds of their People. Hence the antient Prophets deſcribe the *Meſſiah* in the Character of a Shepherd; and our bleſſed Saviour, to ſhew that he was the Perſon intended by the Prophets, applies the ſame Character to himſelf; thereby to repreſent his Government of the Church and tender Concern of Mankind. *He ſhall feed his Flock like a Shepherd; he ſhall gather the Lambs with his Arms, and carry them in his Boſom, and ſhall gently lead thoſe that are with Young*, Iſai. lx. 11. *ſhall ſeek that which was loſt, and bring again that which was driven away; ſhall bind up that which was broken, and ſtrengthen that which was ſick*, Ezek. xxxiv. 16. all lively Emblems of our Lord's paſtoral Care, and the various Methods which he hath employed to accommodate his Diſpenſations to our Wants, in order to promote our etenal Salvation. And, as the Character of a Shepherd did well become our gracious Saviour, ſo there is ſomething in the very Nature and Diſpoſition of Sheep (which appears ſo innocent and inoffenſive, ſo peaceful and gentle, ſo patient and ſubmiſſive, ſo honeſt and undeſigning) as carries a near Reſemblance to that Plainneſs and Probity, that Modeſty and Humility, that Quietneſs and Submiſſion, which are, indeed, the firſt Elements of the *Chriſtian* Religion, as well as the Qualifications requiſite to the Reception of it. It is to be obſerved, however, that as the Shepherd's Art in managing his Sheep, in the *Eaſtern* Countries, was different to what is among us, (to which Purpoſe we read of his going before, leading and calling his Sheep, and of their following and knowing his Voice; whereas our Shepherds go after and drive their Sheep) ſo theſe ſeveral Expreſſions do, in the Moral, denote our Lord's receiving into

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the Number of *Chriſtians* all thoſe humble and obedient Souls, that come to him in the Spirit of Meekneſs, not in the Cloathing, but in the real Qualities of his Sheep, and making Proviſion for their Growth in Grace, and Improvement in all Virtue and Godlineſs of Living.

ACCORDING to the primary Inſtitution of God, it was the proper Province of the Sons of *Levi to teach the Children of* Iſrael *all the Statutes, which the Lord had ſpoken unto them, by the Hand of* Moſes, Levit. x. 11. and therefore it was required, that *the Prieſts Lips ſhould preſerve Knowledge, and the People ſeek his Law at their Mouths*, Mal. ii. 4, 7. but (however it came about) no ſooner did their Traditions grow in Eſteem, than the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, not only took upon them to be the Guides and Teachers of the People, but maintained likewiſe, that others were to receive Authority to teach, from their Commiſſion and Ordination to that Office, though we no where find that they received any ſuch Authority from God; for which Reaſon our Saviour repreſents them as *a Plantation which his Father had planted*, Mat. xv. 13. and bids his Diſciples *beware of their Doctrine*, Mat. xvi. 12, becauſe *they taught for Doctrines of God the Commandments of Men, and made void the Commandments of God by their Traditions*, Mat. xv. 6, 9.

IN ſeveral of the *Greek* Copies, as well as the *Syriac*, *Perſian* and *Gothic*, the Words *before me*, John x. 8. (for our Saviour ſpeaks in his own Perſon) are omitted; and ſome Criticks are of Opinion, that this Omiſſion was early, becauſe the *Manichees* (according to *Theophylact*) made no Scruple to infer from hence, that the Prophets of the *Old Teſtament*, had not their Miſſion from God. Our Saviour has ſufficiently eſtabliſhed the Authority of the Prophets; and by theſe Paſſages means no more, than that all thoſe, who, before him, had taken upon

upon them the Title and Quality of *Meſſiah* (ſuch as *Theudas* and *Judas Galilæus*, mentioned *Acts* v. 36, 37.) were Thieves and Robbers, becauſe they uſurped a Character which they had no Right to; and that all before him, who either had not their Commiſſion from God, or could not prove it by extraordinary Miracles (ſuch as the Author of the *Rabbinical Traditions*, and of all the other reigning Sects among the *Jews*) were far from being the true Shepherds of God's People.

HIS Sheep are here ſuppoſed by ſome to be his elect and peculiar Friends; and thence they infer, that *Chriſt* laid down his Life for them only. Now, if we reſpect the Council of God, and the Deſign of *Jeſus Chriſt*, nothing is more certain, than that he gave himſelf *a Ranſom for all*, 1 Tim. ii. 6. and *taſted Death for every Man*, Heb. ii. 9. and *was a Propitiation for the Sins of the whole World*, 1 *John* ii. but then, becauſe the World, can no otherwiſe lay hold on the Benefits of this Propitiation, than by believing, and being obedient to the Voice of this Shepherd, he therefore is ſaid to do this more eminently for his Sheep. The Apoſtle, I think, has determined the whole Controverſy in a few Words, *He died for all, that they who live might not live unto themſelves, but unto him who died for them.*

THE *Gentiles* our Saviour calls his other Sheep, by way of Anticipation, becauſe he foreknew that many of them (when once his Goſpel came to be tendered to them) would give it a ready Reception, be converted and baptized; and becauſe the ceremonial Law (which was the Partition-wall between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*) was ſhortly to be broken down, and the *Gentiles* admitted to the ſame Privileges with them that believed in his Name.

BUT now to return. Before the Concluſion of the Feaſt, as he was walking in *Solomon's* Porch, ſeveral of the *Jews* came and required him to tell them, in poſitive Terms, whether he was the *Meſſiah* or not;

to

to which his Anſwer was, that he had already ſufficiently informed them of that, but to no Effect; that the Miracles which he wrought in his Father's Name, were a Evidence of his Miſſion; that the Reaſon why they believed him not, was, becauſe they were not of a Diſpoſition proper for his Sheep; that to ſuch as were his Sheep, and followed him, he would give eternal Life; and that none could pull them out of his Father's Hands, or his own, becauſe *he and his Father were one.* Upon this laſt Expreſſion, the *Jews* concluded him to be a Blaſphemer, and were going to ſtone him; and though he reminded them of the many good Actions he had done for them in his Father's Name, and endeavoured to apologize for his calling himſelf the Son of God (becauſe in Scripture we find Judges and Magiſtrates frequently ſo ſtiled, and much more then might he, who was conſecrated and ſent by God, aſſume that Title) yet all this would not appeaſe their Rage, ſo that he was forced to leave the City, and went thence over *Jordan* to *Bethabara*, where *John* had formerly baptized, where great Multitudes reſorted to him, both to hear his Inſtructions, and to be healed of their Diſeaſes; and where he made many Diſciples, becauſe the Place put the People in Mind that whatever *John* had reported of him was true.

WHILE he continued in theſe Parts, a certain Perſon put a curious Queſtion to him, concerning the Number of thoſe who ſhould be ſaved: Whereupon he took Occaſion to admoniſh his Hearers, "That "they ought to uſe their uttermoſt Endeavours to "enter in at the ſtrait Gate of Salvation, becauſe "the Number of thoſe who ſhould not attain it, "would be large; that they ought to do it with all "Expedition, becauſe when once the Gate was ſhut, "and the Means of Salvation withdrawn, all Pre-"tences of having heard the glad Tidings of the "Goſpel, and of having been converſant with him "upon Earth, would gain them no Admittance; that all

" all Workers of Iniquity ſhould be utterly exclud-
" ed; and therefore the *Jews*, in particular, would
" have Cauſe to lament, when they ſhould ſee many
" Heathens from all Parts of the Earth, poſſeſſed of
" the Glory of Heaven, with *Abraham*, *Iſaac* and
" *Jacob*, and all the antient Prophets; while them-
" ſelves (who were the Heirs of the Kingdom)
" ſhould be thruſt out, and ſo made the laſt who
" were once the firſt."

As he was diſcourſing in this Manner, ſome of the *Phariſees*, who could not longer bear with Patience the Power and Authority, which he had gained among the People, in Hopes of getting rid of him, came and ſuggeſted the Danger he was in from *Herod Antipas*, ſo long as he continued in *Galilee*, which was Part of his Dominions: But, far from betraying any Fear upon ſuch Information, he let the *Phariſees* know that having but a few Days longer to live, he was determined to devote them to the Relief of the Diſtreſſed, the curing Diſeaſes, and caſting out Devils; and as to *Herod*'s Subtilty and Deſigns againſt his Life, they were altogether ſuperfluous, becauſe he foreknew that he was to ſuffer Death at *Jeruſalem*, which was the Place appointed (as it were) for the Slaughter of all the Prophets; and hereupon he broke out into a moſt pathetic Exclamation againſt that unhappy City, reproaching them with their killing the Meſſengers ſent from God, and then denouncing their ſad approaching Deſtruction.

TAKE the following Remarks on the preceeding Paſſages.

SOLOMON's Porch conſiſted of ſome ſtately Cloiſters on the *Eaſt* Side of the Temple, and not far from the *Court of the Gentiles*. It was ſo called *Solomon*'s, either to preſerve the Memory of that great Prince, or becauſe it was built according to the Model of that which was erected, 1 *Kings* vi. 3. for both in the Temple, which *Zorobabel*, and in that which *Herod* rebuilt, the Plan of *Solomon*'s was chiefly

obſerved, though ſome Variations might be allowed of: And in this Porch our Saviour was walking; becauſe at this Time it was Winter, and here he found a Cover from the Injuries of the Weather; whereas, in the Summer Seaſon, it was cuſtomary with the *Jews* to walk in the open Courts of the Temple.

SOME are of Opinion, that the Words in the Text, which we render *becauſe*, are not rational, or do not render a Reaſon for theſe People's Infidelity, but only intimate, that their Infidelity was conſequential to their not being the Sheep; or, in other Words, that they could not believe, becauſe they were not elected. But to obviate this, we muſt obſerve, that the Reaſon which our Lord here aſſigns for his Defect of Faith, is doubtleſs ſuch, as made it a great Crime in them; for ſure that muſt be ſuch, for which they were to *die in their Sins*, *John* viii. 24. It is therefore certain, that this Unbelief cannot be reſolved into any natural Defect of Knowledge on their Parts, nor any Act of Reprobation on God's Part, but purely to the Want of a teachable and well-diſpoſed Mind. For, were it the ſame Thing, to be one of *Chriſt*'s Sheep, and to be predeſtinate to Faith and Salvation, the Import of our Saviour's Words muſt be this, *Ye therefore believe not, becauſe ye are not of the Number of the Elect, but of thoſe whom God hath, form all Eternity, rejected.* Now, by this Account of the Matter, our Saviour would not have accuſed, but excuſed the Infidelity of the *Jews*, and they, which as good Reaſon, might have replied to him, "We therefore believe not, becauſe God, "by his Act of Reprobation, had ſhut the Door of "Faith againſt us, and ſo our Infidelity is not to be "imputed to us, but God."

BY the Words, *he and his Father*, one in Eſſence and Nature, one in Authority and Power, and not barely one in Will and Conſent: And that this is the genuine Signification of the Words appears, 1ſt,

From

From the original Text, where it is not ſaid, I and my Father are one Perſon, in the Maſculine Gender, but one Thing in the Neuter. Now if that Thing be not the Divine Being, they cannot be one; for ſince the Father is confeſſed to be God, the Son cannot be one Thing with the Father, if he be not God too. 2dly, It appears from the Context, where our Saviour, having, in the preceeding Verſes, aſcribed the Preſervation of his Sheep to the Power of his Father, *None is able to pluck them out of my Father's Hands*, aſcribes the ſame alſo to his own Power, *Neither ſhall any pluck them out of my Hand*; plainly intimating, that his Sheep were equally ſafe in his own Hand, as in his Father's, becauſe, ſays he, *I and my Father are one*. And 3dly, It appears from the Verſes which immediately follow; for when the *Jews* took up Stones to ſtone him, as guilty of Blaſphemy, becauſe he made himſelf God; he does not evade the Charge, by ſaying that he only conſpired with the Will of God, as all true Prophets did; but appealed to the Works, which he performed by the Power of the Father reſiding in him, which plainly carries it to an Unity of Power, not of Will only; and then St. *Chryſoſtom*'s Inference is undeniable, that *if the Power be the ſame, the Eſſence alſo is the ſame.*

THE Man who propoſed the Queſtion to our Saviour, concerning the Number of thoſe who ſhould be ſaved, had doubtleſs in his Thoughts the common Opinion of the *Jews*, that all *Iſraelites* (how much ſoever they may ſuffer in this) *might have their Portion in the World to come*; but this was a Queſtion of too much needleſs Curioſity for our Saviour to anſwer, becauſe it is no Part of our Concern, how many ſhall be ſaved, but only how, and by what Means we are to work out our own Salvation: And therefore he took Occaſion from hence to inſtruct the Man (and in him all others) in what might be of much more ſubſtantial Benefit to him.

THIS Expreſſion of the *ſtrait Gate*, whether it

was borrowed from the Heathen Sages, or no, is extreamly like them: For *Cebes* tells us, that at the firſt Entrance upon a Courſe of Virtue, *there is a little Gate*; that after we have paſſed this Gate, *there is a Narrow Aſcent*; and that the Way following is *rough and rugged*, becauſe it is not much frequented; but that, *after we have got up to the Top of the Hill, the reſt is ſmooth and eaſy, free from all Obſtructions, and leading to the Regions of Felicity.*

AND hence we may perceive, to our Comfort, that though the Ways of Virtue and Religion are not at their firſt Entrance, ſo very agreeable, yet, in Proceſs of Time, they will be found to be *Ways of Pleaſantneſs*, Chriſt's *Yoke eaſy, and his Commandments not grievous.*

WHETHER the *Phariſees*, who ſuggeſted to him the Danger he was in from *Herod Antipas*, came upon their own Account, or by the Inſtigation of *Herod*, is the Queſtion; if they came upon their own Account, it is certain that they came not out of any Kindneſs to our Saviour; becauſe the whole Hiſtory of the Goſpel informs us, that they were far from having any Affection for him, and therefore they muſt come with a Deſign, either to ſcare him out of *Galilee*, where he had been too popular for them, or to drive him into a Trap, which they had laid for him in *Judea*. This ſeems to be a genuine Interpretation enough of the Senſe of the *Evangeliſt*; and therefore, in our Hiſtory we have followed it: But ſtill it ſeems not improbable, that, conſidering the preſent Circumſtances that *Herod* was under, he might ſend theſe Meſſengers to our Saviour. He had but lately gained no good Reputation among the *Jews*, by murdering *John*, whom all the World looked upon as a Prophet: And therefore, ſeeing that our Saviour exalted *John*; eſpecially in the Fame and Renown of his Miracles, he was unwilling to augment the *Odium*, which already lay upon him, by any freſh Acts of Violence to a Perſon that was reputed

reputed a Prophet, much ſuperior to the *Baptiſt*, whom he had ſlain. He had got a Notion too, that the *Baptiſt*, at leaſt the Soul of the *Baptiſt*, in another Body, was riſen from the Dead, and what the Effect of the Ghoſt's haunting his Dominions might be, he could not tell; and therefore he might think it convenient to put theſe *Phariſees* upon ſome Expedient to get our Saviour (whom poſſibly he might take for *John* revived) removed farther from him. However this be, 'tis certain, that he, or the *Phariſees*, or both, had a Mind to have him gone ſomewhere elſe, and that, for this Purpoſe the Meſſage was brought him.

THE Subtilty of that Prince is implied in the Anſwer which our Saviour makes to the *Phariſees*, and which looks, indeed, as if they had been ſent from him, *Go tell that Fox:* The Expreſſion, however, may be taken, either in a mild or an harſher Senſe. If in a mild, it may denote that exquiſite Policy, wherewith this Prince conducted his Affairs all his Life-time, ſiding ſometimes with the *Sadducees*, juſt as it ſuited his Intereſt: But, ſuppoſe it be taken in an harſh Senſe, it will no Ways affect our Saviour's Character, nor infringe the Command of not *ſpeaking Evil of the Ruler of the People*, ſince our Lord was a Prophet ſent from God, and the Office of a Prophet is, not to ſpare Kings, when they reprove their Offences.

SOME are of Opinion, that becauſe the *Jews* had referred to the *Sanhedrim*, which ſat at *Jeruſalem*, the whole Cognizance and Trial of Prophets, therefore a Prophet was not to ſuffer out of that City; but their Interpretation ſeems to enervate our Saviour's Sentiment, whoſe Deſign certainly was to repreſent the City of *Jeruſalem*, ſo accuſtomed to ſhed the Blood of the Prophets, that there was ſcarce a Poſſibility for any Prophet's dying out of it.

LET us now proceed. One Sabbath-day, when

Jeſus

Jeſus was invited by a *Phariſee* of ſome Diſtinction to dine with him, a Man diſtempered with a Dropſy came after him; and when ſeveral of the Company narrowly obſerved how he would behave upon this Occaſion, he firſt cured the poor Man, and then juſtified his doing ſo, by the ſame Argument he made uſe of to thoſe who reprehended him for curing the crooked Woman on the Sabbath. Obſerving, however, how eager the Gueſts were to take every one the uppermoſt Places at the Table, he endeavoured to convince them, how commendable it was for a Man to ſeat himſelf in a Place below, rather than above his Rank and Condition, becauſe daily Experience ſhewed us, that Humility was a Virtue, which was ſo far from debaſing, that it raiſed and exalted the Perſon who practiſed it. And then, turning his Diſcourſe to the Maſter of the Houſe, whom he found too regardleſs of the Poor, and Needy, he gave him (and in him all others) the good Advice of inviting the Poor, the Blind, and the Lame, who could make no Requital, rather than his own Friends, or rich Acquaintance, who were able to return the Compliment to his Entertainments; and in ſo doing, he might depend upon a Recompence from God in the Kingdom of Heaven.

AT the Hearing of theſe laſt Words, one in the Company repeated that common Saying among the *Rabbins*, *Bleſſed is he that ſhall eat Bread in the Kingdom of God*; whereupon our Lord took Occaſion to repreſent the different Succeſs of the Goſpel, the Rejection of the *Jews*, and the Call of the *Gentiles*, under the Emblem of the Feaſt, to which thoſe that were invited, upon ſundry Pretences refuſed to come; ſo that the Maſter of the Houſe was obliged to ſend out into the Streets and Lanes of the City, and into the High-ways and Hedges, to collect a ſufficient Compliment of Gueſts, being determined that none of thoſe who were firſt invited, ſhould taſte of his Supper.

As he was going from the *Phariſee*'s Houſe, where he dined, being attended with a mighty Concourſe of People, he began to explain to them what they were to truſt to, if they intended to become his Diſciples; that they were to renounce even ſome of their moſt lawful Affections, and prepare themſelves to undergo the moſt unjuſt Perſecutions, if they thought of making Profeſſion of his Religion; and therefore (that they might not fail in the Day of Trial) he adviſed them to conſider well before-hand, what ſuch a Profeſſion would coſt them, "For as he, "who begins to build, and has not Money to ac-"compliſh it, leaves his Work imperfect, and him-"ſelf becomes ridiculous; or as he, that deſigns a "War, and has not Men and Money enough to go "through with it, had better never have engaged "in it; ſo he that undertakes to be a Chriſtian, muſt "reſolve to renounce all that is dear to him in this "World, or elſe he will never be able to hold "out."

AMONG the great Multitudes, that daily reſorted to our Saviour to hear his Diſcourſes, were many Publicans, and Sinners. This gave great Offence to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who murmured at his condeſcending Goodneſs, in ſo freely converſing and eating with ſuch infamous People. But to vindicate himſelf in this Reſpect, he compared his Conduct to that of a Man, who having an hundred Sheep, left the ninety and nine, to go in Queſt of one, which was gone aſtray; to that of a Woman ſearching with all Diligence for a Piece of Silver that was loſt, and rejoicing exceedingly when ſhe found it; and to that of a Father, receiving his returning prodigal Son with all the Indications of Joy and Tenderneſs, notwithſtanding the Remonſtrances of his elder Brother: For under the Name of the elder Brother, he reproved the unjuſt Murmurings of the *Phariſees*, who were diſpleaſed at his entertaining *Sinners*, though the Salvation of ſuch was the main End of his coming into the World.

HAVING

HAVING thus expoſed the Pride and Envy of the *Phariſees*, he proceeded, in the next Place, to reprove their Covetouſneſs, and at the ſame Time, to inſtruct his Diſciples, what the proper Uſe was, that they were to make of their Riches. To this Purpoſe he introduces an unjuſt Steward, who, after having abuſed his Truſt, and waſted his Maſter's Subſtance, is contriving what Proviſion to make for himſelf (which he does by abating his Maſter's Creditors in their Bills) when he came to be removed from his Place; and thereupon he teaches his Diſciples not to intimate the Injuſtice, but the Forecaſt and Policy of this Steward, by employing their earthly Riches to make them Friends in the Perſons of the Poor, that when they came to leave this tranſitory World, they might, by this Means, be received into everlaſting Habitations in Heaven; and that ſo the Children of Light might become as prudent in Things relating to their Salvation, as the Children of this World were, in the Management of their temporal Affairs.

THIS Diſcourſe made little or no Impreſſion upon the *Phariſees*; and therefore (to awaken their Attention) he propounded to them the Parable of a certain rich Man living in Pride and Eaſe, and Luxury, who, after his Death, was carried into the diſmal Regions of the Damned; and of a certain poor Beggar, named *Lazarus*, laying at his Gate full of Sores and Ulcers, and deſiring the Fragments that came from his Table, who, when he died, was tranſported by Angels into *Abraham*'s Boſom: "That in theſe different States, the poor Man, in "Compenſation of his former Miſery, enjoyed "all the Felicity that his Heart could wiſh; while "the rich Man, in Puniſhment of his Luxury, and "Want of Mercy to the Poor, was forced to under-"go the moſt inexpreſſible Torments, without be-"ing able to procure ſo much as one Drop of "Water to cool his inflamed Tongue, and without "being able to prevail for the once deſpiſed *Lazarus*

to

" to be ſent upon a Meſſage of Admonition to his " ſurviving Brethren, becauſe they had *Moſes* and " the Prophets for their Inſtructors, or a ſtanding " Revelation of the Divine Will; and if that pre- " vailed not with them, nothing would, for the " Direction of their Lives."

HERE let us give ſome Explanations of what we have ſaid.

THE Preſence of the dropſical Man, and its being the Sabbath-day, would involve our Saviour (as they thought) in this Difficulty, That either, by forbearing to heal at that Time, he would betray his Fear, and ſtrengthen their Superſtitions with Regard to ſuch ritual Obſervances; or elſe, that by doing it, he muſt incur the Cenſure and Odium of a Sabbath-breaker, and a Contemner of the Law: But he, who was well aware what Spies he had upon him, ſo ordered the Matter, as to accompliſh what he ſaw fit, without any Opportunity given for his Enemies to compaſs their Ends by it.

WHETHER the Precept of inviting the Poor, *&c.* is to be underſtood in a literal Senſe, or no, may, in ſome Meaſure, admit of a Debate. Our Saviour, when he acted the Part of a rich Man, in feeding the Multitude, had People of the meaneſt Rank; and among theſe, the Poor, the Maimed, the Lame, and the Blind (who daily reſorted to him for Cure) for the Chief of his Gueſts: But moſt Men think, that theſe extraordinary Actions of his were no proper Pattern for us, in the Diſpenſation of our Charity, but that we anſwer the Intent of the Precept, if we do what is equivalent to it, in the reſpect of Charge, and more advantagious to them and their Families, by ſending them Meat or Money to refreſh them at Home.

THE Words of the Text are, *When thou makeſt a Dinner or a Supper, call not thy Friends, nor thy Brethren, neither thy Kinſmen, nor thy rich Neighbours.* It is to be obſerved, in our expounding of Scripture, that as comparative Particles are ſometimes uſed in a Senſe negative, (for ſo we find the chief Prieſts

moving the People, that *Pilate* ſhould releaſe *Barabbas* to them, *i. e.* that he ſhould releaſe *Barabbas*, and not *Jeſus*) ſo negative Particles are oft uſed in a Senſe comparative, as when we read in *Proverbs* viii. 10. *Receive my Inſtructions, and not Silver*, and in *Joel* ii. 13. *Rend your Hearts, and not your Garments*, the Meaning is rather than Silver, or your Garments; in like Manner as here, *Call not thy Friends, nor Brethren*, i. e. be not ſo much concerned to call them as the Poor. For it can hardly be thought, that our Saviour's Intent in this Precept was abſolutely to forbid all Invitations of our Neighbours and Acquaintance; but his only Meaning is, that we ſhould not invite them, out of a Proſpect of a Compenſation from them again, which is making a Kind of Traffick with our Generoſity; but, inſtead of this, that we ſhould expend our Money in the Exerciſe of Charity to ſuch as are in no Condition to make us a Retribution.

FROM the enſuing Parable it appears, that the Kingdom of God here does not ſignify the Kingdom of Heaven, in its moſt exalted Senſe; but only the Kingdom of the *Meſſiah*, whereof this carnal *Jew* here ſpeaks, according to the received Senſe of his Nation, as of a glorious temporal Kingdom, in which the *Jews* ſhould lord it over the *Gentile* World, enjoy their Wealth, and be provided with all thoſe earthly Bleſſings and Delights, in which they placed their Felicity.

IF we compare the Emblem of a Feaſt, repreſenting the Rejecting of *Jews*, and the Call of the *Gentiles*, with the Paſſages in *Matt.* xxii. 2. we may be ſatisfied, that by the Kingdom of Heaven is here repreſented the Goſpel Diſpenſation; and this, as it miniſters true Plenty and Pleaſure, all that Men can want, and all they can wiſh, to render them perfectly happy, is compared to a Feaſt. The Bounty and infinite Love of Almighty God are ſignified by the Greatneſs of that Supper; and the Multitudes bidden to it. The firſt Bidding implies all

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the previous Notices of the *Meſſiah*, which by the Law and the Prophets were intended, to prepare the *Jews* for the Reception of him and his Doctrine. The ſecond Bidding, when all Things were ready, ſeems to import all that *Jeſus* did, and taught and ſuffered for their Converſion and Salvation, and all the Teſtimonies and Exhortations of his Apoſtles and other Preachers of the Goſpel, to the ſame Purpoſe. The Excuſes ſent for their Abſence, are the Prejudices and Paſſions, and worldly Intereſts, which did not only hinder thoſe *Jews* from coming into the Faith, but diſpoſed them likewiſe to treat all Attempts to win them over with the utmoſt Obſtinacy and Contempt. The Gueſts brought in from Abroad to ſupply their Places, are the *Gentile* World, to whom (after that the *Jews had thruſt it from them*) the ſubſequent Tenders of this Grace and Salvation were made: And the declaring that none of thoſe, who were bidden, ſhould taſte of this Supper, denote the giving thoſe *Jews* over to a reprobate Senſe, and leaving them under that Infidelity and Perverſeneſs, in which they continue hardened to this very Day.

IT was a Cuſtom of the *Jewiſh* Doctors to lay down before their Proſelytes what Inconveniencies would attend upon their Precepts; and in Conformity to this, our Saviour acquaints his Diſciples with two Things, that would be a Means to deter them from embracing his Religion, *viz.* the Difficulty of the Duties that would be required of them; and the Greatneſs of the Sufferings to which they would be expoſed.

THE Meaning of the Words in the Text, *If any Man come to me, and hate not his Father, and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren, and Siſter, yea, and his own Life alſo, he cannot be my Diſciple*, in this Place is not, that a Man ſhould, properly ſpeaking, hate his Father and Mother: For certainly our Bleſſed Lord, who enjoins us to love our Enemies, would never make it our Duty to hate our Parents; And

therefore the Word *Miſein* (which is an *Hebraiſm*) muſt neceſſarily here be taken in a lower Senſe, viz. *to love or eſteem leſs*, in the ſame Manner as it is ſaid of *Leah*, that *Jacob hated her*, Gen. xxix. 31. i. e. did not love her ſo well as he did *Rachael*: For that *this* and no *more*, is here the Import of the Expreſſion is plain from a parallel Text, *He that loveth Father and Mother, more than me, is not worthy of me.*

THEY, whom the Scripture generally, and the *New Teſtament* in particular, characterize by the Name of *Sinners*, are the habitual and obdurate, the the great and eminent Offenders.

THE *Scribes* and *Phariſees* looked upon the *Publicans* as unfit to be converſed with upon any Account, even though it was to reclaim them from their evil Courſes. Our Saviour had told them, that he converſed among ſuch People, as their Phyſician, and not as their Companion; and that, therefore, his proper Buſineſs was among ſuch Patients: But this Apology would not ſilence their Murmuring, becauſe their Opinion was, that God had caſt off all Care of them, and never intended to grant them Repentance unto Life.

HERE *Chriſt* ſets ninety and nine juſt Perſons in Oppoſition to one Sinner; not that it is ſo in Proportion; for there are very few who live according to the Rule that is preſcribed them; but becauſe, even upon a Suppoſition that it were ſo, ſuch is the Value of our immortal Souls, that great Care and Pains ought to be taken even from the Sake of one.

A SHEEP, whence once it has ſtrayed away, is a Creature remarkably ſtupid and heedleſs: It goes wandering on, without any Power or Inclination to return back, though each Moment it is in Danger of becoming a Sacrifice to every Beaſt of Prey that meets it. And ſuch, in Truth, is the Condition of People addicted to Vice, when they have broken out of

of God's Fold, and forſaken the pleaſant Paſtures which he provides for them. They grow careleſs and inconſiderate, and are expoſed to Snares and Temptations every Moment. They are hardened by Cuſtom; are depraved in their Affections and Judgments; are neither diſpoſed to grow wiſer, nor of themſelves capable of conquering inveterate Habits of Vice, though they ſhould, now and then, ſhew ſome good Inclination to attempt it.

By the Compariſon of a *loſt Piece of Money*, we are given to underſtand, that God eſteems the Souls of Men precious, and reckons them among his Wealth, and his Treaſures: And his, indeed, they are; made and formed by his own Hand; impreſſed with his own Image and Superſcription; and from that Stamp, which carries a Reſemblance to the great King of the whole World, deriving all their Currency and Value. But when they abandon God's Laws, and forſake the divine and rational Life; a Life of Goodneſs and Wiſdom, renounced for one of Senſuality and Madneſs, and Miſchief, then they are loſt; loſt to themſelves, and loſt to God. Then this Coin is debaſed, the Impreſſion obliterated and gone, and the Piece of Money, as to the Worth and Uſe of it, is, in a Manner, as if it were no longer in Being.

THE Parable of the *prodigal Son* is deſervedly reckoned a Maſter-piece, and what cannot be paralleled by any of the Apologues or allegorical Writings of Heathen Authors. It is adorned and beautified with the moſt glowing Colours, and lively Similitudes. It is carried on and conducted with admirable Wiſdom and Proportion, in the Parts, as well as in the Whole, and there is ſo exact a Relation, between the Things preſented, and the Repreſentations of them, that the moſt elevated Underſtanding will admire, and the loweſt Capacity diſcover the excellent and moſt uſeful Moral, that lies under ſo thin a Veil.

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THERE is a good deal in this and the following Parable, that alludes to the Notions of the *Jewiſh Rabbins*, and their Manner of expreſſing them. "The Fruits of the Earth (ſays one of their Doctors) "are like a Table ſpread in an Houſe; the Owner "of this is God: Man, in this World, is as it were, "the Steward of this Houſe; if he behaves himſelf "well he will, find Favour in the Eyes of his Lord, "if otherwiſe, he will be removed from his Steward-"ſhip," *Kimchi*, on *Iſai.* xl. And ſo the Scope of this following Parable ſeems to be this,——That we are to look upon ourſelves, not as Lords of the good Things of this Life, as though we might uſe them at our Pleaſure, but only as Stewards, who muſt be faithful in the Adminiſtration of them. The Parables, indeed, Make mention of no other Goods but thoſe of Riches; but we muſt not therefore imagine, that rich men only ſtand in the Capacity of Stewards, ſince every Advantage of Nature or of Grace, as well as thoſe of Fortune, our Life, our Health, our Strength, our Wit and Parts, our Knowledge natural and acquired, our Time, our Leiſure, our every Ability, our every Opportunity, our every Inclination to do well, are all our Maſter's Goods; all intruſted with us; all capable of benefiting others, and will all, at laſt, be brought to our Account.

THE Words in the Text are, *Make yourſelves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs.* Now *Mammon* or *Mammona*, is a *Syriac* Word, and properly denotes Riches or a Treaſure. It comes from a *Hebrew* Root, which ſignifies *to be hid*; and is therefore thought to comprehend, not only Gold, Silver, and other Metals that are hid in the Bowels of the Earth, but Stores likewiſe of Corn, Wine, and Oil, (a great Part of the Riches of the *Eaſtern* People) which they often buried in ſubterraneous Caverns, to conceal them from their Enemies. Theſe are called the *Mammon of Unrighteouſneſs*, becauſe they frequently

frequently occaſion much Iniquity in the World, and are often acquired by very indirect Means; but our Lord, by this Expreſſion, muſt not be ſuppoſed to command Alms to be given of that which is gotten by Fraud or Injuſtice, becauſe ſuch Charity can never be acceptable to God. No, the Duty of thoſe Men who have acquired Wealth unrighteouſly, is to make Reſtitution to the Perſons they have injured; if theſe be dead, then to their Heirs or Executors; and the Poor are only then the Receivers of the Fruits of Injuſtice, when a Perſon is conſcious that he has been unjuſt, but does not know the Perſons to whom he has been ſo.

WHETHER this Repreſentation, which our Saviour here makes of the different Fates of the rich and the poor Man, be a Parable or a real Hiſtory, is a Matter, wherein ſeveral Commentators are not agreed. We are told, however, that in ſeveral Manuſcripts, both *Greek* and *Latin*, there are theſe Words in the Beginning of the 19th Verſe, *He ſpake to them another Parable*; and that this very Parable is in the *Gemara Babylonicum*, from whence it is cited by the learned *Sheringham*, in his Preface to his *Ioma*; as indeed, if we look into the Circumſtances of it, ſuch as the rich Man's *lifting up his Eyes in Hell*, and ſeeing *Lazarus* in *Abraham's* Boſom; his Diſcourſe to *Abraham*; his Complaint, of being tormented with Flames, and his Deſire that *Lazarus* might be ſent to cool his Tongue, or at leaſt to convert his ſurviving Brethren: If (together with the great Gulph that is fixed between the two Places of Bliſs and Torment) we do but conſider the Particulars, I ſay we muſt needs conclude, that, as they cannot be underſtood of any departed Soul, in a literal Senſe, they muſt be an allegorical Repreſentation of Things inviſible, by Terms, in ſome Meaſure, ſuitable to the Opinion of the *Jews* concerning the State of Souls after Death.

LAZER, which, according to moſt, is but a Contraction from *Eleazer*, is the very ſame with *Aniachad*,

achad, a poor Man, in the *Gemara*, and properly ſignifies *one without Help*, or rather *one that has God for his Help*: But, in the Times of our Bleſſed Saviour, we may obſerve, that it was a common Name among the *Jews*, and given to the Men of ſome Diſtinction; as we find it was to the Brother of *Martha* and *Mary*.

THE *Garden of* Eden *and* Paradiſe, the *Throne of Glory*, and *Abraham*'s *Boſom*, were common Expreſſions among the *Jewiſh* Doctors, to denote a future State of Felicity; for ſo *Joſephus*, in the Diſcourſe of the *Maccabees*, ſays of good Men, that *they are gathered to the Region of the Patriarchs, and that* Abraham, Iſaac *and* Jacob, do *receive their Souls*: And they tell us farther, that the Souls of ſuch Men are carried thither by Angels; for ſo the *Targum* on *Cant.* iv. 12. ſays, that *no Man hath Power to enter into the Garden of* Eden, *but the Juſt, whoſe Souls are carried thither by the Hands of good Angels.* Our Commentators, however, have perceived ſomething peculiar in the Phraſe of *Abraham*'s *Boſom.* They imagine, that the *Jewiſh* Notion of Paradiſe was, a Place abounding with Delights, and perpetual Feaſtings, where *Abraham*, the great Founder of their Nation, enjoys the uppermoſt Place at the Table; and while all his Children ſit down with him ſome at a nearer, and ſome at a farther Diſtance from him, he who has the Honour to recline upon his Boſom, (as *Lazarus* is here repreſented) is in a higher Degree of Felicity than ordinary. But others deride all this Notion, and aſſert, that *Abraham*'s *Boſom* was ſo called, not from any Poſture of Gueſts at Table, but from little Children, whom their tender Parents do ſometimes take in their Boſom, and ſometimes cauſe them to ſleep there. For, ſince, *thoſe that die in the Lord*, ſay they, are ſaid to ſleep or *reſt from their Labours*, where can they be ſaid to enjoy this Reſt or Sleep better than in the Boſom of the Father of the Faithful?

A good deal of this, concerning the Torments of the rich Man is to be taken in a figurative Senſe; but our Saviour poſſibly inſerted this Paſſage in the Parable, on Purpoſe to ſtrike at a vain Imagination, which ſome of the *Jews* were apt to entertain, *viz. That Hell-Fire had no Power over the Sinners of* Iſrael, *becauſe* Abraham *and* Iſaac *came down thither to fetch them from thence*; which could not fail of being effectually confuted, when they heard *Abraham*, as it were, with his own Mouth, declaring that no Help was to be expected from him, when once they were got into that Place.

MOSES and the Prophets comprehend all the ſeveral Diſpenſations of God's Mercy, which are expreſſed either in the *Old* or *New Teſtament*. They ſignify the whole revealed Will of God, and whatever he hath ſet down therein, as neceſſary to our attaining eternal Life and Happineſs. Whatever Doctrine can be proved out of them, we are bound to embrace it, with a new Miracle; as on the other hand, whatever Doctrine is inconſiſtent with them, we muſt reject, though an *Angel from Heaven*, or one from the Dead ſhould come and preach it to us.

ONE raiſing from the Dead certainly could not do it, becauſe he could come with no greater Authority, deliver no better Motives to Repentance, nor give them any greater Aſſurance of the Truth of what he ſaid, than what they had already. That a Reſurrection from the Dead was not ſufficient to convince them, is plain from hence, that our Saviour had raiſed *Lazarus*, and yet the Phariſees were not the more obedient to his Doctrine. Nay, though they had the moſt clear Proofs of his own Prophets, and their Guards that kept the Sepulchre; from the Teſtimony of their own Senſes, of the Apoſtles, and five hundred Witneſſes at once; yet all this was inſufficient to reclaim that wicked Generation for their Iniquity, or to move them to Repentance.

HERE let us reſume our Story.

OF the great Numbers of People, who attended our Lord, wherever he went; ſome came out of Neceſſity, others out of Curioſity; ſome out of a Spirit of Devotion, and others out of a Spirit of Captiouſneſs, and with an Intent to entangle him in his Diſcourſe. Of their laſt Sort were the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who taking the Queſtion of Divorces to be ſomewhat intricate, put it to our Saviour; but he, limited the Permiſſion of ſuch Seperations to the Caſe of the Adultery only, reminding them of that ſtrict and natural Union between Man and Wife, which God had appointed at their firſt Creation, and was not, conſequently, to be diſannulled by any human Inſtitution. Here the *Phariſees*, thinking they had got the Advantage of the Argument, objected the Precept of *Moſes*, wherein he permitted the Huſband, in many Caſes, to give a Bill of Divorce to the Wife; but to this our Saviour replied, That, though under the *Moſaical* Diſpenſation, God, knowing their Obſtinacy and perverſe Inclinations, allowed a Diſpenſation in this Point, by tolerating Divorces; yet, according to the original Inſtitution of Marriage, it was not ſo; and therefore, to reduce the Matter to its primary Eſtabliſhment, he determined that all Divorces, for any leſs Cauſe, than that of Fornication, were illegal, and on both Sides attended with Adultery. This, when ſome of the Diſciples heard, and (ſince the Engagement was ſo rigorous) began to expreſs their Diſlike of Marriage, our Lord allowed it to be true, that in thoſe who had the Gift of Continency, a ſingle Life was more conducible towards the Attainment of the Kingdom of Heaven; but that thoſe, who had it not, and thought proper to marry, ought, by all Means, to adhere to the firſt Inſtitution.

AFTER this, he began to remind his Diſciples of ſeveral Things he had inſtructed them in before, *viz.* of the Impoſſibility of preventing Scandals and Offences; of the Duty of forgiving our Brother his repeated

repeated Tranſgreſſion of the Neceſſity and Efficacy of Faith, in order to be heard in our Requeſts to God of Humility in the Performance of our Duty, becauſe at the beſt we are but unprofitable Servants; and, eſpecially, of Humility in our Addreſſes to God, of which he gave them a parabolical Inſtance, in the different Behaviour of a *Phariſee* and a *Publican*; the *Phariſee* vaunting out his own Praiſe at his Devotion, and preferring himſelf before all others; but the *Publican*, in a dejected Heart, confeſſing his Sins, and imploring God's Mercy; and yet the latter (according to our Lord's Judgment) departed more acceptable to God than the other; becauſe the divine Decree is, *That Pride ſhould be abaſed, and Humility exalted.*

THE *Phariſees*, who waited for the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, who had drawn up a romantick Scheme, of his appearing with the utmoſt Glory, as a temporal Prince came, about this Time, and demanded of him, *when the Kingdom of God*, whereof he had told them ſo much, *was to appear?* To which he gave them in Anſwer, That it ſhould not appear with any Pomp or Splendor, as they vainly imagined: and that, in Truth, it was already begun among them, though they had no Perception of it: And then returning to his Diſciples, he gave them a Caution not to be deluded by falſe Prophets, who would pretend to ſhew them the Kingdom of God where it was not; that before he could enter into his glorified State, he was to ſuffer many Things, and be rejected by the *Jews*; but that, after his Death, he would give inconteſtible Proofs of his Power and Dominion, by the wonderful Propagation of his Goſpel, and by the ſpeedy and amazing Vengeance which he intended to take on that Nation: And therefore he exhorted them not to imitate the Security of the People in *Noah*'s Time, or of the Inhabitants of *Sodom*, nor to expreſs any Concern for the Deſtruction of their Country, as did *Lot*'s

Wife, but to uſe their utmoſt Care and Diligence (when they ſaw the *Roman* Armies advancing) not to be involved in the general Calamity: And becauſe, in involving ſome, and preſerving others, there would be much of God's diſtinguiſhing Providence concerned, he therefore exhorted them to pray without fainting, or being diſcouraged at any Thing; and, to this Purpoſe, propounded a Parable of a poor Woman, who, by her continued Importunity alone, prevailed with an unjuſt Judge to vindicate her Wrongs, *though he feared neither God nor Man.*

THE *Jews*, at this Time were divided in their Opinions as to the Matter of their Divorces. Some of them who followed the Sentiments of the School of *Shammah*, held that the Wife was to be put away only for the Crime of Adultery, becauſe *Moſes* directs, that this might be done, in Caſe the Huſband *had found ſome Uncleanneſs in her*, Deut. xxiv. 1. But others, who adhered to the Notions of the School of *Hillel* (and they were by much the greater Number) mentioned on the contrary, that this was permitted to be done for any Cauſe whatever, becauſe in the ſame Verſe, it is expreſſed, that *if ſhe found not Grace* in her Huſband's Eyes, ſhe was divorceable. This was the Queſtion which the *Phariſees* brought to our Saviour, thinking that he muſt have decided it, either againſt the Law of *Moſes*, or againſt the Determination of one of theſe two famous Schools, and, one Way or other, have become offenſive to the People; but our Saviour evaded all this, by reducing Matrimony to its original Inſtitution.

THIS is a Matter, which the *Heathens* themſelves ſeemed not unacquainted with; and therefore it is ſaid in *Hierocles*, that *Nature prompts us to Marriage, in that ſhe hath made us ſo, that two ſhould live together, and have one common Work to beget Children*; and that Tale of *Plato*, in his *Convivium*, *That Man, at firſt, was made Male and Female, and that, though* Jupiter

cleft

cleft them aſunder, there was a natural Love towards one another, and an Inclination to heal human Nature, by making one again of two, ſeems to be only a Corruption of the Account in *Geneſis* of *Eve*'s being made out of *Adam*'s Rib.

THE *Phariſees*, in their Reply to our Saviour, ſeem to intimate, that the Lawfulneſs of Divorces was founded upon a divine Command; *Why then did* Moſes *command to give her a Bill of Divorcement, and put her away?* But *Moſes* no-where commands, but only, in ſome Caſes, permits the doing of this; nor is the Deſign of the whole Precept to give any Encouragement to this Practice, but only to provide, that (in caſe Men will be ſo perverſe and hard-hearted, as to turn away their Wives upon every ſlight Occaſion) the Thing might be done in a proper and publick Manner, not by Word of Mouth, but by Bill of Divorcement, delivered in Form, that, when the Woman is thus diſmiſſed, ſhe may not be quite ruined, but left at her Liberty to become another Man's Wife, *Deut.* XXIV. 2.

BUT here the Queſtion is, Whether this Diſpenſation excuſed the common Divorces among the *Jews* (which our Saviour looks upon as an Infringement of the primitive Inſtitution of Marriage) from all Sin, eſpecially that of Adultery, in the Sight of God? 'Tis granted indeed, that theſe Divorces were contrary to the Equity and genuine Intention of God's firſt Inſtitution of Marriage, but then it muſt be added, that God, by his Servant *Moſes*, had diſpenſed with his own Inſtitution; that under ſuch his Diſpenſation, there could be no Prohibition; and that, where there was no Prohibition, there could be no Tranſgreſſion; unleſs we can ſuppoſe, that God could forbid, and permit the ſame Thing, at the ſame Time. Our Saviour indeed, upon this Occaſion, preſcribes a new Law, which had not before obtained among the *Jews*; he retracts the Diſpenſation that *Moſes* had given; he reduces Marriage to its primitive Inſtitution

tion; and, except in Caſes of Adultery, allows of no Divorces, but accounts them all null and invalid: However, under the *Moſaick* Diſpenſation it was not ſo. From the Permiſſion, given to the Women, when they were thus divorced, to be married to others, it is evident, that theſe Divorces quite diſſolved the Bond of Matrimony, otherwiſe we muſt ſay, that God gave theſe Women, when they married again, a Toleration to live in a State of Adultery, and ſo, at long-run, the whole Commonwealth of *Judea* muſt, by a divine Permiſſion, have been filled with Adultery and a ſpurious Offspring, which is incongruous to the Wiſdom and Purity of Almighty God to imagine.

The *Phariſee*'s Temper is ſufficiently diſcovered in the Form of his Prayer: *God, I thank thee, that I am not as other Men are, Extortioners, Unjuſt, Adulterers, or even as this Publican.* This Stile is inſolent and boaſting; that of an Herald, rather than a Supplicant; and does not ſo much render God his Praiſes, as proclaim his own. But, admitting this lofty Opinion of his own Excellencies to be never ſo juſt, yet what Warrant or Privilege could he have, to diſparage and vilify his Brethren? *I am not as other Men:* What could be more fulſome Vanity, than thus to ſet himſelf off, as an Exception to a whole World at once? *Or even as this Publican:* To break *that bruiſed Reed,* and with ſcornful Reproaches, to fall foul on a wounded Soul, whoſe penitent Sorrow called for the Compaſſion of every Stander-by. The *Publican,* quite contrary to all his Expreſſions, in all his Deportment, ſpeaks nothing but Shame, and Confuſion, the tendereſt Contrition, and moſt profound Humility. He ſtands afar off, as not preſuming upon a nearer Approach to the Preſence of ſo holy a Majeſty. He lifts not up ſo much as his Eyes to Heaven, but, by the Guilt and Melancholy of his Countenance, takes to himſelf the ignominious Titles, ſo liberally beſtowed by his ſcornful Companion. He ſmites upon his Breaſt,

Breaſt, as conſcious of the Pollutions lodged there; looks not abroad, but confines his Thoughts to his own Miſery; alledges nothing in his own Behalf, no Mixture of Good to mitigate the Evil of his paſt Life; feels no Comfort, ſeeks no Refuge, except in the Mercy of a forgiving God; brings no Motive to incline that Mercy, but a ſorrowful Senſe of his own Unworthineſs, and an humble Hope in God's undoubted Goodneſs: And therefore upon this, this ſaving, this only ſupporting Attribute, he caſts himſelf entirely, with a *God be merciful to me a Sinner.*

WHETHER the *Phariſees* Queſtion to our Saviour, *When the Kingdom of God ſhould appear*, was put in Deriſion, becauſe, in his Diſcourſes, he had ſo often mentioned the *Kingdom of God*, or in ſober Seriouſneſs, becauſe, at this Time, they were in ſtrong Expectations of the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, and his erecting a ſecular Kingdom among them, is not ſo eaſy a Matter to determine. Their contemptible Opinion of *Chriſt* inclines ſome to think the former; but their generally received Opinion about the *Meſſiah* gives ſome Countenance to the latter: But, in whatſoever Senſe they intended the Queſtion, our Saviour's Anſwer perfectly fits them. Only we may obſerve, that, *by the Kingdom of God* here, the *Phariſees*, and our Saviour, meant two very different Things: The *Phariſees*, a *flouriſhing* Kingdom, wherein the *Meſſiah* was to reduce all other Nations under the *Jewiſh* Yoke; but our Saviour, a Kingdom of *Wrath* and *Vengeance*, which he deſign'd to exerciſe even upon the *Jews* themſelves; and withal a ſpiritual Kingdom, which he deſign'd to erect in the Hearts of Men by the kindly Operations of his Word and Spirit, when his Goſpel ſhould be more fully propagated: For this is the Meaning of that Compariſon, *As the Lightning that lighteth out of the one Part under Heaven, ſhineth unto the other Part under Heaven, ſo alſo ſhall the Son of Man be in his Day*, ver. 24. He had told them, that the *Kingdom of God* was *already come among them*, and had

had appeared in the Purity of his Doctrine, and the Miracles, which he had wrought to confirm it; tho' not in that glaring Light, as to make them take a proper Notice of it; and here he tells them farther, that, after his Reſurrection, it would ſhine with ſuch a freſh and glorious Brightneſs, by the Effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt* on his Diſciples, as would render it equal to the Splendor of the Sun ſhining from one Part of Heaven to the other, and cauſe it to be propagated, almoſt as quick as Lightning, through the World; and that then this *Son of Man*, ſo ſcornfully rejected by them, would alſo appear ſuddenly, and glorioufly, to revenge upon them their Infidelity, and the Affronts which they had offered to him.

THE Diſtinction between *falſe Chriſts*, and *falſe Prophets* is, that the former took upon them to be *Chriſt*, and came under that Name; the latter were ſuch as promiſed and foretold falſe Things. Amongſt the Number of the *falſe Chriſts*, who appeared in the Time prefixed by our Saviour, *i. e.* between his Reſurrection and the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, are generally reckoned, *Doſitheus*, who (according to *Origen*) gave it out, that he was the *Chriſt*, whom *Moſes* had foretold; *Simon Magus*, who bewitched the People by his Sorceries, and made himſelf paſs for *the great Power of God*, *Acts* viii. 9, 10. and alſo many more, whom the *Time of the Advent of their King* Meſſiah (as *Joſephus* expreſſes it) *prevailed with to ſet up for Kiag*. Among the Number of *falſe Prophets*, who appeared in this Period, are likewiſe reckoned *Theudas* (not the Perſon mentioned, *Acts* v. 36.) who, in the Government of *Fadus*, promiſed his Followers, that he would divide the River *Jordan*, (as it was in the Days of *Joſhua* and *Elias*) and give them a free Paſſage. The *Egyptian Jew*, who, in the Government of *Fælix*, drew thirty Thouſand after him to the Mount of *Olives*, where he promiſed, by his Prayers, to make the Walls of *Jeruſalem* (as thoſe of *Jericho* once did) fall flat to the Ground; thence drive the

Roman

Roman Forces; and there fix the Seat of his Empire: A certain *Magician*, who, in the Government of *Feſtus*, led great Numbers of *Jews* into the *Deſert* and promiſed them a Deliverance from all their Troubles; and ſeveral others, who taught the *Jews*, even to the laſt, to expect Help and Deliverance. Good Reaſon therefore had our Bleſſed Saviour to caution his Diſciples againſt all ſuch Pretenders to a divine Miſſion, ſince, according to his Prediction, and, as *Joſephus* expreſſes it, *the Land, at this Time, was quite over-run with Impoſtors and Seducers, who drew the People after them in Shoals*; though the *Roman* Governors were ſo very ſevere, that there *hardly a Day paſſed, without the Execution of ſome of them.*

Lot's Wife, inſtead of making haſte to ſave herſelf, as the Angel had commanded her, out of a vain Curioſity, muſt needs *look back*, either regretting what ſhe had left behind her in the City, or concerned for thoſe that were deſtroyed in it, till ſhe was overtaken with the Flame, and changed into a *Statue of Salt*, or into the Condition of a Corps ſalted and embalmed, which continued, as a Monument of her Diſobedience, for many Ages after. And, in like Manner, if any of our Saviour's Diſciples neglected the Advice, which he here gave them, and continued in *Jeruſalem* when the *Roman* Army had cloſely inveſted it, they, very likely, were involved in the common Deſtruction.

THE Words in the Text, *Whereſoever the Body, or the Carcaſe is, there will the Eagles be gathered together*, Matth. xxiv. 28. Luke xvii. 37. Theſe Words, which our Saviour here makes proverbial, ſeem to have been borrowed from the Paſſage in *Job*, where he ſpeaks of the Eagle in theſe Words; *ſhe dwelleth, and abideth on the Rock, upon the Crag of the Rock, and the ſtrong Place, from thence ſhe ſeeketh the Prey, and her Eyes behold afar off. Her young ones alſo ſuck up Blood, and where the Slain are, there is ſhe*, Job xxxix. 28, *&c.* Upon the Account of the Swiftneſs, the Strength, and Invincibleneſs of this

Bird, no doubt it was, that the *Romans* made the Eagle their Enſign in War; and therefore our Saviour by making uſe of this Expreſſion, gives us to underſtand, that the *Romans* would come upon the *Jews* with a ſudden Deſtruction; ſurround them ſo that they ſhould be no eſcaping their Hands; and in whatſoever Country they found them, there put them all to the Sword. For the Eagle, mentioned in *Job*, is by Tranſlators rendered by a Word, which ſignifies a Vulture, a Bird conſecrated to *Mars*, becauſe it loves to feed upon Man's Fleſh, and therefore, by a kind of natural Inſtinct, *travels along with Armies, in Expectation of the Carcaſſes that fall there.* Nor is it an uncommon Thing for the Prophets to expreſs the *Day of God's Vengeance* under the Idea of a *Feaſt*, which he had prepared for the ravenous Birds and Beaſts of the Field; for thus ſaith the Lord, *Speak unto every feathered Fowl, and to every Beaſt of the Field, aſſemble yourſelves and come, gather yourſelves on every Side to my Sacrifice, that I do ſacrifice for you, even a great Sacrifice upon the Mountains of* Iſrael, *that ye may eat Fleſh, and drink Blood, even the Fleſh of the Mighty, and the Blood of the Princes of the Earth*, Ezek. xxxix. 17, 18. *Vid.* Iſa. xxxiv. 6. *and* Jer. xlvi. 10.

THOUGH it were Blaſphemy to think, that God acts upon the ſame Motives with the unjuſt Judge, in the Parable, yet this we may learn from the Nature of the Parable, that, if a Perſon, who neither fears God, nor regards Man, who hath neither any Senſe of Religion or Humanity, may be ſuppoſed to be ſo far prevailed upon by the earneſt Prayer of a miſerable neceſſitous Creature, as to grant the Requeſt made to him, and to adminiſter Relief to the Suppliant, meerly upon the Continuance and Importunity of the Petitions, that are put up; how much more ought we to think, that God, who is infinite Goodneſs itſelf, who is always kind and bountiful to his Creatures, who delights to do them Good, even without their deſiring it, and who is able to do them

Good,

Good, with much leſs Pains, than they can requeſt it; how much more ought we to think, I ſay, that this God, upon our earneſt and hearty Prayer to him, (eſpecially if we be importunate, and perſevering in our Devotions) will return us a kind Anſwer, and grant us ſuch Supplies, ſuch Protection, or Aſſiſtance, as ſhall be needful for us.

WE now proceed. Shortly after this *Jeſus* croſſed the River *Jordan* into *Perea*, where he was followed again by vaſt Multitudes of People, whom he both taught, and cured of ſuch Diſtempers as they had, inſomuch that ſeveral of the Company, perceiving how ready he was to do Good to all that came unto him, brought their Children with them, in order to partake of his divine Benediction; but his Diſciples, thinking it below the Dignity of their Maſter to be diſturbed, and interrupted by Infants, at firſt refuſed Admittance to thoſe who brought them; until *Jeſus*, having reproved them for ſo doing, and withal recommended the Innocence and Simplicity of theſe Babes, as a Pattern for their Imitation, commanded them all to be introduced, and, taking them up in his Arms, he laid his Hands upon them, and bleſſed them, and ſo departed from the Place where this Tranſaction happened.

As he was on his Journey, a young Perſon of Diſtinction, who was very rich and wealthy, deſired to know of him, what he was to do in order to attain eternal Life. Our Saviour propoſed to him the Obſervation of the Moral Law, and remitted him, in particular, to the Commandments of the *Second Table*, as a certain Sign of his keeping thoſe of the *Firſt*; but when the young Gentleman told him, that all theſe he had made his Study to obſerve from his Youth, and our Lord, who knew his covetous Temper, and was willing to touch the ſecret Sore of his Mind, told him, that if he aimed at Perfection in Religion, his only Way would be, to ſell his Eſtate, and give it to the Poor (in Hopes of a greater Treaſure in Heaven) and to come, and

be one of his Diſciples; the young Man went away very penſive and melancholy, began loth to part with his preſent Poſſeſſions for any Treaſure in Reverſion. Whereupon our Lord, turning to his Diſciples, being to declare, what an inſurmountable Obſtacle Riches, without the Grace of God, were to any Man's Salvation, and that *it was eaſier* (according to the *Hebrew* Proverb) *for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven:* At which Expreſſion when his Diſciples were not a little ſtartled, to remove their Fears, he let them know that the Salvation of the Rich (though a Matter of ſome Difficulty) was not impoſſible with God, who could change the Hearts and Affections of Men, as he pleaſed.

WHEN the Apoſtles heard their Maſter bidding the young Man, *ſell all, and give to the Poor, and follow him*, and promiſing him, for a Reward, a *Treaſure in Heaven*, they began to think, that poſſibly, it might be their Care, and the Promiſe, in like Manner, concern them; and therefore, when (in the Name of the reſt) *Peter* deſired to know of him, what Reward they were to expect, who had actually relinquiſhed *all*, and followed him; his Reply was, that, at the general Reſurrection, *when himſelf ſhould be ſeated upon his Throne of Glory, they alſo ſhould ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of* Iſrael; and that not only they, but all others likewiſe, who, for his, and the Goſpel's Sake, ſhould quit any worldly Advantages or Poſſeſſions, ſhould receive ſuch Comforts in this World, as would vaſtly ſurpaſs their Loſſes, and, in the World to come, eternal Life; But then, to ſhew them that ſuch high Rewards proceeded from the Bounty of Heaven, and no other Title, he repreſented the Freedom of God in the Diſtribution of his Favours, under the Emblem of a certain Maſter of a Family, ſending Labourers into his Vineyard, ſome ſooner,

and ſome later, by giving them all the ſame Wages; wherein though he ſeemed kind to ſome, yet was he unjuſt to none, becauſe he paid them all according to his Agreement, and (having done ſo) was then certainly left to his Option, whom to make the Objects of his Liberality.

HERE it may be proper to ſtop, to take a Review of this Period of our Story.

THE Word *Perea* is derived from the *Greek*, which ſignifies *beyond*, and intimates *the Country beyond* Jordan, or on the Eaſt-ſide of that River. It was bounded (according to *Joſephus*) to the *Weſt*, by *Jordan*; to the *Eaſt*, by *Philadelphia*; to the *North*, by *Pella*; and to the *South*, by *Macheron*; and was a fruitful Country, abounding with Pines, Olive-trees, Palm-trees, and other Plants, that grow up and down in the Fields, in great Plenty and Perfection; and, in the exceſſive Heats, was well watered, and refreſhed with Springs, and Torrents from the Mountains.

THE Parents, who brought their Children to *Chriſt*, were doubtleſs ſuch as believed him to be a *Prophet ſent from God*; and were perſuaded, that the Touch, or Impoſition of his Hands, would be of great Benefit to them, both to draw down a Bleſſing from Heaven upon them, and to preſerve them from Diſeaſes, which they ſaw him cure in Perſons more advanced in Years. We may obſerve therefore, that, though theſe Children were no more than Infants (as appears by our Saviour's taking them up in his Arms, *Mark* x. 16.) yet their Parents thought them capable of ſpiritual Bleſſings, and of receiving Advantage by our Saviour's Prayers. They however, might bring them, with no farther Intent, than what is cuſtomary among the *Jews* even now, when they preſent their Children to any of their famous Doctors, *viz.* to obtain his Bleſſing; but by the Reaſon which our Saviour gives for their Admiſſion into the Kingdom of Heaven, it appears, that he perceived ſomething in them

them (beſides their being Emblems of Humility) that qualified them to come unto him; and what could that be, but a Fitneſs to be dedicated to the Service of God, and to enter into Covenant with him early (as the *Jewiſh* Children did) by the Rite of Baptiſm (which was in Inſtitution) even as the others did by that of Circumciſion?

WE muſt not imagine, becauſe our Saviour refers the young Man (who deſired to know what he muſt do to attain eternal Life) to the Precepts of the *ſecond Table* only, that therefore they are of more Obligation to us, than thoſe of the *firſt*; or that by performing them alone, we may attain eternal Life: Our Lord has elſewhere determined, that the greater Command of all, is, *to love the Lord our God with all our Heart*; and here he inſtances in thoſe of the *ſecond Table*, not only becauſe the Love of our Neighbour is an excellent Evidence of our Love to God, but becauſe the *Phariſees* (of which Sect very probably this Perſon was one) thought theſe Commandments of trivial Account, and eaſy Performance, and yet by ſome of theſe it was, that our Saviour intended, by and by to convince this Inquirer, that he neither had kept, nor could keep them.

SINCE our Bleſſed Saviour here requires of this young Man, not only to withdraw his Heart from an inordinate Love of his Poſſeſſions, but to ſell them all, and give the Money to the Poor, we may be ſure, that this was a particular Command to him, in order to convince him of the Inſincerity of his pretended Love to Life eternal, and not a Precept common to all *Chriſtians*. That there were rich Men in the Church, we learn from ſeveral Paſſages in Scripture, 1 *Tim.* vi. 17. *James* i. 10. and ii. 2. St. *Peter*, in his Speech to *Ananias*, permits *Chriſtians* to retain what is their own, *Acts* v. 4. and St. *Paul* does not injoin the *Corinthians* to ſell all, and give Alms, but, only requeſts them to adminiſter to their Brethren's Wants out of their Abundance, 2 *Cor.* viii.

14.

14. So that if Riches fall into the Hands of one, who knoweth how to uſe them to God's Glory, and the Relief of indigent *Chriſtians*, as well as to ſupply his own Needs, it ſeems a Contradiction to conceive, that God requires him to part with them, and to diveſt himſelf of any farther Opportunity of promoting his Glory, and doing Good to his needy Members. This Precept therefore of *ſelling all we have*, can only take Place when we are in the ſame Situation with this young Man, *i. e.* have an expreſs Command from God ſo to do, or when we find that our Riches are an Impediment to the ſecuring of our eternal Intereſt; for, in that Caſe, we muſt patt with a *Right-hand*, or a *Right-eye*, the neareſt and deareſt Things we have, *rather than be caſt into Hell-fire.*

THERE are three different Opinions among Interpreters concerning the Meaning in the proverbial Saying, of a Camel's going through the Eye of a Needle. Some imagine, that at *Jeruſalem*, there was a Gate ſo very low and narrow, that a loaded Camel could not paſs through it, and that, by Reaſon of its Littleneſs, it was called *the Needle's Eye*; but all this is mere Fiction, deviſed on Purpoſe to ſolve the ſeeming Difficulty. The *Jews* indeed, to ſignify a Thing impoſſible, had a common Proverb among them, that an *Elephant cannot paſs through the Eye of a Needle.* Now, our Saviour, ſay ſome, was pleaſed to change their Proverb from an Elephant (which was a Beaſt that few had ſeen) to a Camel, a Creature very common in *Syria*, and whoſe Bunch on his Back hindered him from paſſing though any ſtrait Entrance. But others, not able to diſcern any Analogy between a Camel and a Needle's Eye, think that the *Greek* Word here ſignifies a Cable, or thick Rope, which Mariners uſe in caſting their Anchors; and that the rather, not only becauſe there is ſome Similitude between a Cable and a Thread, which is uſually drawn through the Eye of a Needle, but becauſe

cauſe the *Jews* (as the learned *Buxtrof* acquaints us) have a Proverb of the like Import, relating to the Cable, as they have to the Elephants; for ſo they ſay, that *as difficult is the Paſſage of the Soul out of the Body, as that of a Cable through a narrow Hole.* Whether of theſe two Interpretations takes place, 'tis a Matter of pure Indifference: Only we may obſerve, that the Application of the Proverb to the rich Man's entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, muſt not be underſtood abſolutely, but only ſo, as to denote a Thing extreamly difficult, if not impoſſible, without an extraordinary Influence of the divine Grace.

THEY were exceedingly amazed, ſaying, Who then can be ſaved? But why ſhould they ſtart this Queſtion, when there were apparently more Poor than Rich in the World? Theſe Poor, however, the Diſciples might think, were, by their Poverty, expoſed to as many and great Temptations, as the Rich were; and as the World, they ſuppoſed, was made up either of thoſe that were rich, or thoſe that deſired to be ſo, from hence they collected the Difficulty for any to get to Heaven.

THE Word, which the Original, ſignifies the *general Reſurrection*, properly ſiignifies a *new* and *ſecond* State, and is uſed among the *Pythagoreans* for the Return of the Soul, after it had left one Body to take Poſſeſſion of another: And, agreeably hereunto, it is uſed, by ſacred Writers, to denote, either the future Reſurrection, which will be the Re-union of the Soul and Body, or that great Change, which was to be effected in the World, by the Preaching of the Goſpel, and more eſpecially, by the Miſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, after our Lord's Aſcenſion into Heaven.

WHEN himſelf ſhould be ſeated on a Throne of Glory, they alſo ſhould be ſeated on twelve Thrones, &c. ſome Interpreters refer theſe Words to that Authority, both in Matters of Diſcipline and Doctrine, which

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the Apoſtles, after the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, were, by the Lord's Commiſſion and Appointment, to exerciſe in the Chriſtian Church; but moſt underſtand them of their Honours that are to be conferred upon them in a future State. And here ſome have taken great Pains to determine, what Judgment theſe Perſons ſhall paſs, as they that ſhall condemn the Errors of wicked Men by their Doctrines, and the Malice and Obſtinacy of Infidels by their Perſecutions, *&c.* while others have undertaken to aſſign them their Parts in the Proceſs of the laſt great Day, and repreſent them as ſo many Aſſeſſors to the ſupreme Judge, ſitting upon the Examination and Trial of Mankind, while the reſt ſtand at the Bar. But, though we are all well aſſured, that ſuch a Judgment ſhall be, yet, as to the particular Circumſtances and Formalities of it, the Scripture ſeems to give us but a ſlender Inſight; and therefore, ſetting aſide all dark Conjectures about this Matter, the moſt ſafe and probable Way of applying this Paſſage, is to look upon it as ſpoken *after the Manner of Men*, to ſignify, in general, a brighter Crown, or more exquiſite Degrees of Happineſs and Glory. The Apoſtles accompanied, and ſtuck cloſe to *Chriſt* in his loweſt Eſtate: They kept the Faith, under the greateſt Preſſures and Temptations; they were indefatigably diligent, undauntedly conſtant in their Labours, and Sufferings for the Truth, and moſt eminently ſerviceable in advancing the Kingdom of *Chriſt* upon Earth; and therefore they ſhall receive an eminent Diſtinction in the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE Parable, of a certain Maſter of a Family ſending Labourers into his Vineyard, is, in a great Meaſure, taken from the *Jeruſalem Talmud*; where we have an Account of a King's hiring Labourers, and paying one, for a few Hours Work, the whole Day's Hire, which occaſioned great Murmuring among the reſt. It was our Saviour's Cuſtom we may obſerve,

cauſe the *Jews* (as the learned *Buxtrof* acquaints us) have a Proverb of the like Import, relating to the Cable, as they have to the Elephants; for ſo they ſay, that *as difficult is the Paſſage of the Soul out of the Body, as that of a Cable through a narrow Hole.* Whether of theſe two Interpretations takes place, 'tis a Matter of pure Indifference: Only we may obſerve, that the Application of the Proverb to the rich Man's entering into the Kingdom of Heaven, muſt not be underſtood abſolutely, but only ſo, as to denote a Thing extreamly difficult, if not impoſſible, without an extraordinary Influence of the divine Grace.

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THE Word, which the Original, ſignifies the *general Reſurrection*, properly ſiignifies a *new* and *ſecond* State, and is uſed among the *Pythagoreans* for the Return of the Soul, after it had left one Body to take Poſſeſſion of another: And, agreeably hereunto, it is uſed, by ſacred Writers, to denote, either the future Reſurrection, which will be the Re-union of the Soul and Body, or that great Change, which was to be effected in the World, by the Preaching of the Goſpel, and more eſpecially, by the Miſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, after our Lord's Aſcenſion into Heaven.

WHEN himſelf ſhould be ſeated on a Throne of Glory, they alſo ſhould be ſeated on twelve Thrones, &c. ſome Interpreters refer theſe Words to that Authority, both in Matters of Diſcipline and Doctrine, which the

the Apoſtles, after the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt upon them, were, by the Lord's Commiſſion and Appointment, to exerciſe in the Chriſtian Church; but moſt underſtand them of their Honours that are to be conferred upon them in a future State. And here ſome have taken great Pains to determine, what Judgment theſe Perſons ſhall paſs, as they that ſhall condemn the Errors of wicked Men by their Doctrines, and the Malice and Obſtinacy of Infidels by their Perſecutions, *&c.* while others have undertaken to aſſign them their Parts in the Proceſs of the laſt great Day, and repreſent them as ſo many Aſſeſſors to the ſupreme Judge, ſitting upon the Examination and Trial of Mankind, while the reſt ſtand at the Bar. But, though we are all well aſſured, that ſuch a Judgment ſhall be, yet, as to the particular Circumſtances and Formalities of it, the Scripture ſeems to give us but a ſlender Inſight; and therefore, ſetting aſide all dark Conjectures about this Matter, the moſt ſafe and probable Way of applying this Paſſage, is to look upon it as ſpoken *after the Manner of Men*, to ſignify, in general, a brighter Crown, or more exquiſite Degrees of Happineſs and Glory. The Apoſtles accompanied, and ſtuck cloſe to *Chriſt* in his loweſt Eſtate: They kept the Faith, under the greateſt Preſſures and Temptations; they were indefatigably diligent, undauntedly conſtant in their Labours, and Sufferings for the Truth, and moſt eminently ſerviceable in advancing the Kingdom of *Chriſt* upon Earth; and therefore they ſhall receive an eminent Diſtinction in the Kingdom of Heaven.

THE Parable, of a certain Maſter of a Family ſending Labourers into his Vineyard, is, in a great Meaſure, taken from the *Jeruſalem Talmud*; where we have an Account of a King's hiring Labourers, and paying one, for a few Hours Work, the whole Day's Hire, which occaſioned great Murmuring among the reſt. It was our Saviour's Cuſtom we may obſerve,

to make frequent Uſe of *Jewiſh* Proverbs in his Diſcourſes; and ſome learned Men have taken Notice, that the Form of Prayer, which he taught his Diſciples, is chiefly compiled from the *Jewiſh* Liturgies. Since therefore he was to teach the People in a parabolical Way, he thought it no Diſparagement to his Parts, to imploy ſuch of their Parables, as were proper to his Purpoſe of illuſtrating the ſpiritual Matters of his Kingdom; as well knowing, that theſe Parables, which were in common Uſe, and familiar to them; would be leſs offenſive, and better remembred by them, than thoſe of his own Invention.

Now let us return. Our Saviour had not been long in *Perea*, before he received a Meſſage out of *Judea*, from two Siſters in *Bethany*, *Martha* and *Mary*, of the dangerous Sickneſs of their Brother *Lazarus*, a Perſon highly beloved and eſteemed by him; but he propoſing, on this Occaſion, to manifeſt the Glory of God, as well as his own divine Power and Miſſion, by a greater Miracle than a ſimple Cure would be delayed his going, until *Lazarus* was dead, and then ſet forward.

WHILE he was in his Journey he took his Apoſtles aſide, and told them ſtill more plainly what the Event would be; namely, that at this Time of his going to *Jeruſalem*, the Chief-prieſts and Scribes would apprehend, and condemn him, and then *deliver him to the* Gentiles, *who would ſcourge, and mock, and crucify him*; but that, *on the third Day he would riſe again*. Upon the Mention of his Reſurrection, which they vainly imagined would be the Beginning of the terreſtrial Greatneſs, *James* and *John*, by the Mouth of their Mother *Salome*, requeſted of him, to have the firſt Places in his Kingdom. The firſt Places in his Kingdom, he told them, were to be diſpoſed of according to the Pre-determination of his Father; but a proper Qualification for them it was, to be able to take the greateſt Share of the bitter Cup of his Sufferings, which very probably might be their Fate;

Fate; and, when the Ambition of theſe two Brothers provoked the Indignation of the other ten Apoſtles, he declared to them all, that his Kingdom was far different from thoſe of the World, whoſe Princes and Governors ſtrove to exerciſe their utmoſt Power and Dominion over their Subjects; whereas, whoever expected to be great and chief among his Followers, muſt be a Servant to the reſt, according to his own Example, who came not to take State upon him, but to ſerve others, and even to lay down his Life for their Redemption.

PURSUANT to our ſettled Method, we ſhall here explain what may ſeem difficult in this Period of the Story.

BETHANY took its Name from the Tract of Ground wherein it ſtands, ſo called from the *Greek* Word which ſignifies the *Dates of Palm-trees*, that grew there in great Plenty. It was a conſiderable Place, ſituated at the Foot of the *Mount of Olives*, about fifteen Furlongs, or near two Miles, *Eaſtward* from *Jeruſalem*; but at preſent it is but a very ſmall Village. One of our modern Travellers acquaints us, that, at the firſt Entrance into it, there is an old Ruin, which they call *Lazarus's-Caſtle*, ſuppoſed to have been the Manſion-houſe, where he and his Siſters lived. At the Bottom of a ſmall Deſcent, not far from the Caſtle, you ſee his Sepulchre, which the *Turks* hold in great Veneration, and uſe for an Oratory, or Place of Prayer. Here, going down by twenty-five ſteep Steps, you come, at firſt, into a ſmall ſquare Room, and from thence creep into another that is leſs, about a Yard and an half deep, in which the Body is ſaid to have been laid. About a Bow-ſhot from hence, you paſs by a Place, which, they ſay, was *Mary Magdalen*'s Habitation; and then, deſcending a ſteep Hill, you come to the *Fountain of the Apoſtles*, which is ſo called, becauſe (as the Tradition goes) theſe holy Perſons were wont to refreſh themſelves here, between *Jeruſalem* and

Jericho, as 'tis very probable they might; becauſe the Fountain is both cloſe to the Road's Side, and very inviting to the thirſty Traveller.

OUR Saviour's Stay for two Days after the Meſſage, and modeſt Addreſs of the two mournful Siſters, kept them indeed a little longer in Suſpence and Grief; but it ſhewed his perfect Wiſdom and Goodneſs, as it made the wonderful Work more remarkable, and conducive to the fuller Conviction of the Spectators. Had he gone before *Lazarus* was dead, they might have attributed his Recovery, rather to the Strength of Nature, than to *Chriſt*'s miraculous Power; or had he raiſed him as ſoon as he was dead, they might peradventure have thought it, rather ſome Trance or Extaſy, than a Death or Diſſolution: But now, to raiſe a Perſon four Days dead, offenſive, and reduced to Corruption, was a Surprize of unutterable Joy to his Friends; removed all poſſible Suſpicion of Confederacy; ſilenced the peeviſh Cavilling, and triumphed over all the Obſtinacy of Prejudice and Infidelity.

IN the Courſe of the Goſpel, we find our Lord forewarning his Diſciples, no leſs than three Times, of his approaching Sufferings and Reſurrection. The firſt Intimation of this Kind was, in the Coaſts of *Cæſarea Philippi*; when, after St. *Peter*'s Confeſſion of him to be *the* Chriſt, *the Son of the living God, he began to ſhew unto his Diſciples, how that he muſt ſuffer many Things*, &c. The next, we meet with, was immediately after his Transfiguration in the Mount; when, as he came down from thence, with the three Apoſtles who were the Companions of his Privacies, he reminded them of what he had told them before, *viz. That the Son of Man ſhould be delivered into the Hands of Men.* The third Warning was that, which he gave his Apoſtles apart, when he was going to *Jeruſalem* to ſuffer, or, as ſome think, when he was going to *Bethany*, in order to raiſe *Lazarus* from the Dead: And 'tis obſerved of

theſe

theſe ſeveral Warnings, that they riſe by Degrees, and grow more full and direct, in Proportion as the Things drew nearer. Thus, the *firſt* is delivered in general Terms: *The Son of Man muſt ſuffer many Things, and be rejected, and ſlain, and raiſed the third Day.* The *ſecond* is forced with this ſolemn Preface, *Let theſe Sayings ſink down in your Ears*; and the *third* deſcends to a more particular Deſcription of that tragical Scene, *He ſhall be delivered to the* Gentiles, *and mocked, and ſpitefully entreated, and ſpitted on; and they ſhall ſcourge him, and put him to Death, and the third Day he ſhall riſe again.* Now whether we conſider the Danger the Apoſtles were in of being oppreſſed with an Affliction, ſo ſenſible, as the Death of their Maſter; or the general Miſtake, wherewith they were infected, concerning the Splendor and worldly Pomp of the *Meſſiah*'s Kingdom, or the Scandal that would neceſſarily ariſe from the Notion of a crucified Saviour, this Method of forewarning his Diſciples of what was to come upon him, was highly requiſite to ſuſtain them in their Tribulation, to rectify their Sentiments, and remove all Offence, as it ſhewed, that his Death was voluntary, conſonant to the Predictions of the Prophets, agreeable to the Counſel and Appointment of God, and the Shame of his Crucifixion abundantly recompenſed by the Glories of his Reſurrection.

THE Mother of *James* and *John* might be encouraged to aſk the firſt Places in the Kingdom, upon the Account of her near Relation to the *bleſſed Virgin*, her conſtant accompanying our Saviour, and diligent Attendance upon him; and might conceive ſome Hopes of her Sons future Exaltation, from the pompous Name which our Lord had given them, and the great Privilege to which he had admitted them (but excluded others) of attending him in his Privacies.

IT was anciently the Cuſtom, at great Entertainments, for the Governor of the Feaſt to appoint to each of his Gueſts the Kind and Proportion of Wine

Wine they were to drink, and what he had thus appointed them, it was thought a Breach of good Manners, either to refuſe, or not drink up. Hence a *Man's Cup*, both in ſacred and prophane Authors, came to ſignify the *Portion*, whether of Good or Evil, which befals him in the World. Not unlike what we meet with in the *Pſalmiſt*, *In the Hand of the Lord there is a Cup, and the Wine is red; it is full mixed, and he poureth out of the ſame. As for the Dregs thereof, all the Ungodly of the Earth ſhall drink them out*, Pſal. lxv. 8. And what our Saviour means by this Expreſſion, we cannot be to ſeek, ſince in two remarkable Paſſages, *Luke* xxii. 42. and *John* xviii. 11. he has been his own Interpreter, for *Lethale poculum bibere*, or to *taſte of Death*, as a common Phraſe among the *Jews*, and from them we have Reaſon to believe that our Lord borrowed it.

THE Prediction concerning the Fate of *James* and *John* was literally fulfilled in St. *James*, who was put to Death by *Herod*, and ſo, in the higheſt Senſe of the Words, was made to *drink of our Lord's Cup*, and, though St. *John* was not brought to ſuffer Martyrdom, yet his being ſcourged and impriſoned by the Council, at *Jeruſalem*, put into a Cauldron of burning Oil at *Epheſus*, and baniſhed into *Patmos* from the Word of God, and for the Teſtimony of *Jeſus Chriſt*, may well be ſuppoſed to be ſome Part of that *bitter Cup*, which our Saviour drank; and that he, who underwent ſuch Torments, as nothing but a Miracle could deliver him, may, with great Juſtice, be eſteemed a Martyr.

THE Words in the Text, *The Princes of the* Gentiles *exerciſe Dominion over them, and they that are great exerciſe Authority upon them; but it ſhall not be ſo among you: But whoſoever will be great among you, let him be your* MINISTER, *Matth.* xx. 25, 26. and from hence ſome have inferred, that our Saviour forbids them, who will be his Diſciples, or the Subjects of his Kingdom, the Exerciſe of all civil and eccleſiaſtical

ſiaſtical Dominion. But if it be conſidered, that civil Government was, from the Beginning of the World, inſtituted by God (and therefore called *his Ordinance*, Rom. xiii. 2.) for the *Puniſhment of Evil-doers*, and for the Defence of *thoſe that do well*; that *Chriſtianity* when it came into the World, made no Alteration in Things of this Nature, but left the Magiſtrate, after his Converſion, ſtill bearing the Sword, in the ſame Manner, as he did before; and that the Exerciſe of his Power is a Thing ſo ſacred, as to intitle, not only Princes, but even their deputed Miniſters of Juſtice to the Stile of *Gods* in Scripture, it muſt needs be allowed, that what is reputed ſo honourable, and found ſo beneficial, ſo ſtrict a Bond of human Virtue, and ſo firm a Guard againſt all Kinds of Wickedneſs, can never be forbidden in any *Chriſtian* Common-wealth. And, in like Manner, ſince, among the Gifts diſtributed for the Uſe of the Church, we read of Governments, 1 *Cor.* xii. 28. and find Mention made of *thoſe, who are ſet over us in the Lord*, 1 Theſſ. v. 12. to whom we muſt yield Obedience, and ſubmit ourſelves, *Heb.* xiii. 7, 17. ſince we find that the Apoſtles had *the Rod*, 1 *Cor.* iv. 21. and Power given of the Lord, to *deliver to Satan*, 1 *Cor.* v. 5. and to *revenge all Unrighteouſneſs*, 2 *Cor.* x. 6. and ſince in the Nature of the Thing it is every whit as impoſſible, for the Church to ſubſiſt without Eccleſiaſtical Government, as it is for a State without civil, it muſt needs follow, that the one is as neceſſary, and of divine Inſtitution, as much as the other. All therefore that our Saviour can be preſumed to forbid in theſe Words, is ſuch a Dominion, whether in Church or State, as is attended with Tyranny, Oppreſſion, and a Contempt of the Subjects, that live under it. Such, for the moſt part, was the Government that obtained in the *Eaſtern* Countries; and therefore, in Oppoſition to this, our ſpiritual Rulers are put in Mind, that they *feed the Flock which is among them, taking the Over-ſight thereof,*

not

not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind, neither as being Lords of God's Inheritance, but Enſamples to the Flock, 1 Pet. v. 2, 3. that their higheſt Station in the Chnrch is not ſo much a Place of Dignity, as a Charge and Office, which ſubjects them to the Wants and Neceſſities of thoſe, they rule over; and that the moſt honourable Poſt they can have in his Kingdom, is only a larger Miniſtry, and Attendance upon others; for, *Who is* Paul? *who is* Apollo? *but Miniſters by whom ye believed*, 1 Cor. iii. 4. *For we preach not ourſelves* (ſays the Apoſtle to the *Corinthians*) *but* Chriſt Jeſus *the Lord, and ourſelves your Servants for* Jeſus *ſake*, 2 Cor. iv. 5.

BUT it is Time we reſume the Hiſtory.

AS he drew near to *Jericho*, attended with a numerous Company, one *Bartimeus*, who had long ſat by the Way-ſide begging, hearing the Noiſe of a vaſt Croud of People paſſing by, and being informed, that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* was among them, with another blind Man, who begged along with him, called aloud upon *Jeſus* to have Mercy upon him. The People who accompanied our Lord, ſuppoſing that the Man aſked an Alms, bid him ceaſe his Noiſe; but the Benefit, which he deſired was of a greater Moment, and therefore he raiſed his Voice, and, with more Importunity, cried, *Thou Son of* David, *have Mercy upon me*; which when our Lord perceived, he commanded both him and his Companion, to be brought before him; and, upon their declaring what Favour they expected, he touched their Eyes, and immediately they received their Sight, and followed him glorifying God, as indeed all the Company did, who had been Eye-witneſſes of this Miracle.

AS our Lord was paſſing through *Jericho*, a certain Man, named *Zaccheus*, of great Wealth and Figure among the Publicans, was not a little deſirous to ſee him; but as he was a Man of a low Stature, and could not gratify his Curioſity in the Croud, he ran before, and climbed up into a Sycamore-tree, where

where he could not fail of having a full View of him. When our Saviour came near the Place, he called him by his Name, and bad him come down, becauſe he intended to be his Gueſt that Day; whereupon *Zaccheus* received him with great Expreſſions of Joy and Reſpect, whilſt others could not forbear reflecting upon him, for entering the Houſe of a Man of ſo ſcandalous a Profeſſion. But notwithſtanding all their Cenſures, our Saviour, who, from the Intuition of his Heart, as well as his own Declaration, knew him to be a juſt and charitable Man, pronounced him, and his Family, in a State of Salvation; and that he though a Publican, and an Alien to the Commonwealth of *Iſrael*, was nevertheleſs one of thoſe, to whom the Promiſes made unto *Abraham* did belong.

THE nearer they came to *Jeruſalem*, the more the Diſciples began to think, that *Jeſus* had taken that Journey to the Paſſover on Purpoſe to ſeat himſelf upon his Throne, and aſſume his regal Authority, and therefore, to cure their Minds of all ſuch Thoughts, he propounded a Parable to them "of a certain "great Man, born Heir to a Kingdom, and going "into a far Country to take Poſſeſſion of it; but, "before he departed, calling his Servants together, "and giving each a Sum of Money to trade withal, "until he ſhould return. The Reaſon of his Journey "to this foreign Land was, becauſe his own Coun-"trymen over whom he had a Right to reign, were "obſtinately ſet againſt, and diſclaimed him for "their King: When therefore he had obtained his "new Kingdom, and was returned home, he firſt "called his Servants, with whom he had intruſted his "Money, to an Account, rewarding the Diligent "with Gifts proportionate to their Improvements, "and puniſhing the Negligent with perpetual Im-"priſonment; and then taking Cognizance of his "Countrymen, who, upon their going to be in-"throned in another Kingdom, diſclaimed all Obe-

" dience to him, he ordered them, in his Preſence, " to be put to Death, as ſo many Rebels;" intimating hereby, both the Puniſhment of negligent *Chriſtians*, and the Deſtruction of the contumacious *Jews*.

BY the Time that our Lord arrived at *Bethany*, *Lazarus* had now been four Days dead, and buried; and ſeveral Friends, and others, from *Jeruſalem*, were come to condole with the two Siſters, *Martha* and *Mary*, for the Loſs of their Brother. Upon the firſt News of our Lord's Approach, the two Siſters, attended with ſome of the Company, that was in the Houſe, went out to meet him; and pouring out a Flood of Tears for the Loſs of the Company, that in the Houſe, went out to meet him; and pouring out a Flood of Tears for the Loſs of their dear Brother, fell proſtrate at his Feet, and wiſhed, over and over again, that he had come a little ſooner, for then they were certain, that he would not have died. The Sight of their Tears and Sorrow, accompanied with the Lamentations of their Followers, affected the *Son of God* ſo, that he groaned within himſelf; and then demanding where they had laid the Body, he followed them to the Place, ſympathizing with their Sorrow, and weeping as well as they, which made ſome of the Company remark, why he did not prevent his Death. When he was come to the Grave, and had ordered the Stone to be removed from it, after a ſhort Addreſs of Adoration, and Thankſgiving to his Father, (for his continual Readineſs to hear him) he cried with a loud Voice, *Lazarus, come forth*; whereupon he, that was dead, immediately aroſe from his Bed of Darkneſs, and in ſuch ſound Health, that, when his Grave-clothes were unlooſed, he was able to walk along with them to *Bethany*.

HERE let us ſtop to explain the foregoing Paſſages.

JERICHO was a wealthy City, in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, the firſt which *Joſhua* took from the *Canaanites*;

Canaanites, and utterly deſtroyed, with a Curſe upon him who ſhould rebuild it, *Joſh.* vi. 26. In the Days of *Ahab* however, *Hiel*, a *Bethelite*, did rebuild it, and had the Curſe, pronounced by *Joſhua*, fully inflicted upon him, 1 *Kings* xvi. 34. After its Reſtoration, this City was ennobled by the Schools of the Prophets, for its Situation ſeems to have been pleaſant; only the Misfortune was, that the Waters of a large Spring, which aroſe not far from it, were very unwholeſome, and deſtroyed the Fruitfulneſs of the Soil, until *Eliſha* cured it, 2 *Kings* v. 21. From which Time the Country, being well watered, became extreamly fruitful. It abounded with Gardens, and thick Groves of Palm-trees, and afforded great Quantities of Balſam, which was the beſt Commodity of the Place. The Country (according to *Joſephus*) is ſeated in a Plain, narrow, but long; for it runs out *Northward* to the Country of *Scythopolis*, and *Southward* to the Land of *Sodom*, being an hundred and fifty Miles in Length, and fifteen in Breadth, and ſeems to be the Place which is called by St. *Matthew*, *the Region about* Jordan. As to the City itſelf, in the Time of the ſecond Temple, it yielded to none in all *Judea*, except *Jeruſalem* (from which it was diſtant about nineteen Miles) for it had a royal Palace in it, where *Herod the Great* ended his Days; an *Hyppodrome*, where the *Jewiſh* Nobility were ſhut up, on Purpoſe to be ſlain after his Death; and an *Amphitheatre*, where his Will was publickly opened and read, with other ſtately Buildings; but, at preſent, it is only a poor naſty Village of the *Arabs*.

ST. *Mark* and St. *Luke* both make mention only of one blind Man, the Son of *Timeus*, upon this Occaſion; but this they doubtleſs did, becauſe he was better known than the other, and bore the greater Part in this Tranſaction.

WHETHER *Zaccheus* was a *Jew* or a *Gentile*, our Commentators are not agreed. The Majority of them account him a *Jew*, but the Words of our

Bleſſed Saviour, *This Day Salvation is come to this Houſe foraſmuch as he alſo is the Son of* Abraham, do very much incline us to think the contrary. Abraham *believed*, we are told, *and it was imputed to him for Righteouſneſs:* And therefore *Zaccheus* is here called his Son becauſe he readily believed in the divine Miſſion of our Saviour *Chriſt*: *For the Seed of* Abraham *was not that only, which is of the Law, but that alſo, which is of the Faith of* Abraham, *who is the Father of us all.* 'Tis not to be doubted therefore, but that *this Day*, in Purſuance of our Lord's Declaration, *Zaccheus* was fully converted to the *Chriſtian* Faith; but whether he was afterwards ordained by St. *Peter* to be Biſhop of *Paleſtine*, is not ſo very clear from Church-hiſtory; but that they, who advance this Notion, may be ſuppoſed to have confounded him with another *Zaccheus*, Biſhop of that Church, who lived in the ſecond Century.

THE Parable of a great Man going into a foreign Country, to take Poſſeſſion of his Kingdom, we may obſerve conſiſts of two Parts. The former of which relates to the rebellious Subjects of this Prince, who *went into a far Country to receive a Kingdom*; the latter relates to that Prince's Servants, to whom he had committed his Money for them to improve in his Abſence; and the Explication of the whole is generally ſuppoſed to be this.——The Nobleman or Prince here is our Lord himſelf, the Son of God; his *going into a far Country to recive a Kingdom*, is his *Aſcenſion into Heaven*, to ſit down at the Right-hand of the divine Majeſty, and take Poſſeſſion of his mediatorial Kingdom; his Servants may be either his Apoſtles and Diſciples, who, upon his Return, were to give an Account of the Progreſs of his Goſpel; or *Chriſtians* in general, who for every Talent, whether natural or acquired, are accountable. His Citizens are, queſtionleſs the *Jews*, who, not only rejected him which Scorn, but put him to an ignominious Death; and his Return is the

Day

Day of his fierce Wrath, and Vengeance upon the *Jewiſh* Nation, which came upon them, about forty Years after this Time, and was indeed ſo very terrible, as to be a Kind of Emblem and Repreſentation of that great Day of Accounts, when he will render *to every one according to his Works*. It is obſerved however, by ſome Commentators, farther, that our Lord took the Riſe of this Parable from the Cuſtoms of the Kings of *Judea* (ſuch as *Herod the Great*, and *Archelaus* his Son) who uſually went to *Rome* to receive their Kingdom from *Cæſar*, without whoſe Permiſſion and Appointment they durſt not take the Government into their Hands. In the Caſe of *Archelaus* indeed, the Reſemblance is ſo great, that almoſt every Circumſtance of the Parable concurs in him. He was this *Eugenes*, or Man of great Parentage, as being the Son of *Herod the Great*: He was obliged to go into a far Country, *i. e.* to *Rome*, to receive the Kingdom of the Emperor *Auguſtus*. The *Jews*, who hated him becauſe of his cruel and tyrannical Reign ſent their Meſſengers after him, deſiring to be freed from the Yoke of Kings, and reduced to a Province of *Rome*: Their Complaint however was not heard: He was confirmed in the Kingdom of *Judea*; and when he returned home, tyrannized for ten Years over thoſe, that would have ſhook off their Dominion; but then there is this remarkable Difference betweeen his Caſe, and that in the Parable, that the *Jews*, upon their ſecond Complaint to *Cæſar*, prevailed againſt him, and procured his Baniſhment to *Vienna*.

IT was cuſtomary among the *Jews* (as Dr. *Lightfoot* tells us form *Maymonidas*, and others) to go to the Sepulchre of their deceaſed Friends, and viſit them for three Days, for ſo long they ſuppoſed that their Spirits hovered about them; but when once they perceived their Viſage began to change, as it would in three Days, in their Countries, all Hopes of a Return to Life were at an End. After a Revolution

volution of Humours, which in ſeventy-two Hours, is compleat, their Bodies tend naturally to Putrefaction, and therefore *Martha* had Reaſon to ſay, that her Brother's Body (which appears by the Context to have been laid in the Sepulchre the ſame Day that he died) would now, in the fourth Day, begin to ſtink.

THE Time of Mourning for departed Friends was antiently, among the *Jews*, of longer Continuance than four Days. For *Jacob* they mourned forty Days, and for *Aaron* and *Moſes* thirty: For Perſons of an inferior Quality three Days, very probably, were fewer, but ſome they had for all; the general Term, both among the *Jews* and *Gentiles*, was ſeven. During this Time, their Neighbours and Friends came to viſit them, and to alleviate their Sorrows with the beſt Arguments they could; they pray with them, they read with them the forty-ninth Pſalm, pray for the Soul of the Dead, and diſtribute their Comforts in Proportion to their Loſs; but no-body opened his Mouth until the afflicted Perſon had firſt ſpoke, becauſe *Job*'s three Friends, who came to comfort him, we find did the ſame, *Job* vii. 13. All which Ceremonies made the Concourſe to *Martha*'s Houſe at this Time, the greater, and gave more *Jews* an Opportunity to be the Eye-witneſſes of her Brother's Reſurrection.

OUR Saviour could not but know, who knew all Things, where they had laid the Body, yet he thought proper thus to aſk, that, being conducted by them to the Sepulchre, there might be no Reſemblance of any Fraud or Confederacy.

THE Words in the Text, *Some of them ſaid, could not this Man, who opened the Eyes of the Blind, have cauſed, that this Man ſhould not have died?* Some imagine, were ſpoken only in Admonition, that having given Sight to a blind Man, that was a mere Stranger to him, he did not cure his ſick Friend: But others conceive a vile *Sarcaſm* in the Words, and as if they

they went about to weaken his Reputation, in a Miracle, wherein he had manifeſtly ſhewn his divine Power, becauſe he did not preſerve his Friend from dying.

THE common Form of a Burial-place, among the ancient *Jews*, was a Vault, hewn out of a Rock, ſix Cubits long, and four broad, in which eight other litlte Cells, or Niches (or, as ſome ſay, thirteen) were uſually made, as ſo many diſtinct Receptacles for the Bodies that were to be laid in them. The Mouth or Entrance of this Vault, was cloſed with a large Stone, which whenever they buried any, was removed; and our Saviour here ordered the Removal of that which lay upon *Lazarus*, to make the Miracle appear more evident, becauſe it would have looked more like an Apparition than a Reſurrection had *Lazarus* come forth when the Door of his Sepulchre was ſo firmly ſhut.

As our bleſſed Saviour, in Virtue of his Union with God the Father had naturally, and in himſelf, a Power of working Miracles, there was no Need for his addreſſing himſelf to Heaven every Time that he did any: However, upon this, and ſome other Occaſions, we find him praying to God, under the Title of his *Father*, that all the Company might know, that what he did was by a *divine*, not *diabolical* Power; and that God, in granting his Petition, acknowledged him to be his Son.

LET us now go on to the next Period of our Hiſtory.

THIS great and apparent Miracle cauſed the utmoſt Surprize and Aſtoniſhment among all the Spectators, and the greateſt Part of them were, from that Time, convinced, and believed on him; but others, more obſtinate, went and reported the Thing to the *Phariſees* at *Jeruſalem*, who there upon called together their grand *Sanhedrim*, where after ſome ſolemn Debate, it was concluded, "That, whether the Man was "a *Prophet ſent from God*, or not, for Fear of giving

"any

" any Umbrage to the *Roman* Powers, it was high-
" ly expedient that he ſhould die, rather than that
" the whole Nation, for his Sake, ſhould incur the
" Danger of being ruined:" And, from that Time, they entered into a Combination to have him apprehended, and put to Death; but, as *his Hour was not yet come*, at preſent he declined their Fury by retreating from the Publick, and retiring to a little Place, called *Ephraim*, in the Tribe of *Benjamin*, where he continued for a few Days, with his Apoſtles, until the Time of the Paſſover was approaching.

SIX Days before that ſolemn Feaſt began, our Lord, in his Way to *Jeruſalem*, called at *Bethany*, where he was kindly entertained at Supper by the two Siſters of *Lazarus*, *Martha* and *Mary*. *Martha*, according to her Cuſtom dreſſed the Supper, but *Lazarus*, whom he had raiſed, was one of the Company that ſat at Table with him; while *Mary*, to expreſs her Bounty, took a Vial of the moſt valuable Eſſence, made of *Spikenard*, and poured it upon his Feet, anointed them, and wiped them with her Hair, ſo that the whole Houſe was filled with the Fragrancy of its Perfume. This Action *Judas Iſcariot*, who afterwards betrayed his Maſter, and had, at that Time, the Cuſtody of the Bag, wherein Money for charitable, and other neceſſary Uſes, was kept, highly blamed, as a Piece of Prodigality, in throwing away what might have been ſold for three hundred Pence, and given to the Poor; not that he valued the Poor, but becauſe he was a greedy Wretch, who was always purloining ſome Part of the publick Money to himſelf. Our Saviour therefore, who knew the Sincerity of *Mary*'s, and the Naughtineſs of *Judas*'s Heart, in a very gentle Reply, commended what ſhe had done, as a ſeaſonable Ceremony to ſolemnize his approaching Death, but blamed the other's pretended Concern for the Poor ſince Objects of this Kind they had always with them, but his Continuance among them was not to be long.

WHILE

WHILE they were ſitting at this Supper, great Numbers of *Jews*, out of Curioſity, came to *Bethany*, not only to have a Sight of *Jeſus*, but of *Lazarus* likewiſe, whom he had raiſed from the Dead, but when the *Sanhedrim* underſtood that the Reſurrection of *Lazarus* occaſioned many People to believe on *Jeſus*, they conſulted how to deſtroy him likewiſe. In the mean Time, *Jeſus* having tarried all Night at *Bethany*, ſet forward, next Morning, with his Diſciples, and others attending him on his Way to *Jeruſalem*. When he came to a Place called *Bethphage*, on the Side of Mount *Olivet*, he ſent two of his Diſciples into the Village, to bring from thence an Aſs, and her Colt, which was not as yet backed, that, to accompliſh a remarkable Prophecy, he might rid thereon to *Jeruſalem*. The Diſciples did as they were ordered; and, having mounted their Maſter on the Colt, he proceeded, as it were in Triumph towards the City, amidſt the loud Acclamations of an innumerable Multitude, whilſt Crowds of People came forth to meet him, with Branches of Palm-trees in their Hands, ſome ſpreading their Garments in the Way, others cutting down Branches, and ſtrewing them where he was to paſs, and all, as it were, with one Voice, crying, *Hoſanna to the Son of* David! *Bleſſed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord!* Hoſanna *in the Higheſt!*

IN this triumphant Manner they advanced, till they came to the Deſcent of Mount *Olivet*, when the whole Body of Diſciples, being tranſported with the Honours ſhewn to their Maſter, broke out into Raptures of Thankſgiving, and loud *Doxologies* to God, for all the mighty Works which they had ſeen; while the whole Body of the People, as well thoſe that went before, as thoſe that followed after, joined with the Diſciples in their *Hoſanna's* and Acclamations; ſo that when ſome *Phariſees*, being envious of his Glory, deſired him to command their Silence, *if*

they ſhould be ſilent, he told them, *the very Stones would proclaim his Praiſe.*

BUT, notwithſtanding all this glorious Proceſſion, as he advanced near to *Jeruſalem*, ſo as to have a full View of the City, and Temple, he caſt his Eyes upon that wretched Place, whoſe deplorable Miſeries he foreſaw, and with Tears in his Eyes, made this Lamentation over it; *Oh! that thou hadſt known, at leaſt in this thy appointed Day, the Things conducing to thy Peace; but now alas! they are hidden from thine Eyes. For the fatal Time ſhall come, when thy Enemies ſhall throw up Trenches about thee, hem thee in on every Side, deſtroy thy Children, demoliſh thee, and not leave thee one Stone upon another, becauſe thou would'ſt not know the Time of thy Viſitation.*

SOME explanatory Remarks are here neceſſary.

THE *Jews* ſeeing the Miracles which *Jeſus* did (this eſpecially of raiſing *Lazarus*) did greatly fear, leaſt taking upon him the publick Character of the *Meſſiah*, he would attempt to make himſelf King, and, by the Admiration which he had gained among the People, be quickly inabled to accompliſh his Ends, unleſs he was timely prevented. If then he was permitted to go on in his Pretenſions, the Conſequence ſeemed viſible to them, that the *Romans*, to whom they were already ſubject, would look upon this as a Rebellion, and ſo be provoked to come with an Army, and deſtroy them utterly. That this was their Fear, is evident from the many groundleſs Objections which they made againſt our Saviour, as that, *He forbid to give Tribute to* Cæſar, *and that he made himſelf a King*, and ſo oppoſed the Title of *Tiberius*. Not that they deſired the Continuance of *Cæſar*'s Dominion over them, but the Apprehenſion of a ſtill farther Conqueſt from the *Romans* made them unwilling to provoke them, and that more eſpecially, becauſe they had an ancient Tradition, that one *Armolus* (which is, by an eaſy Change, *Romulus*) before the End of the World, would come, and deſtroy them. This ſeems to be but

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the Depravation of ſome Prophecy from God, which foretold the Coming of the *Romans* in the laſt Days (meaning thereby the Days of the *Meſſiah*) to deſtroy them. It demonſtrates however, that they both believed, and expected that the *Romans* were the People, from whom the Change of their Religion, and the total Subverſion of their Government, were to come; and for this Reaſon they were, upon all Occaſions, ſo very fearful to offend them. But herein they were ſadly miſtaken; for the Prophecy of the *Romans* coming to deſtroy their Temple and Nation was fulfilled, not by their letting *Chriſt* alone, or believing in him, but by their thus oppoſing and conſpiring againſt him.

EPHRAIM was ſituated between *Bethel* and *Jericho*, about twenty Miles to the *North* of *Jeruſalem*.

SOME Interpreters are of Opinion, that the Supper at which our Saviour was entertained by *Martha* and *Mary*, was the ſame which he was invited to in the Houſe of *Simon the Leper*; that St. *John* has related it in its proper Place, as a Thing which happened ſix Days before the *Paſſover*; but that the other *Evangeliſts* mave mentioned it by way of Recapitulation, to ſhew what might be the probable Occaſion of *Judas*'s Treachery, even his Vexation for being diſappointed of the Money that might have been made of this precious Ointment, had it been ſold, and put in the Bag for him to purloin: But others ſuppoſe, that this Supper was different from that which is mentioned *Matth.* xxvi. 6. and *Mark* xiv. 3. *1ſt*, Becauſe this was in the Houſe of *Lazarus*, *John* xii. 2. that in the Houſe of *Simon the Leper*, *Matth.* xxvi. 6. *2dly*, Here *Mary* anoints the Feet of *Chriſt*, ver. 3. there a Woman not named pours Ointment on his Head, *Matth.* xxvi. 7. *3dly*, This Supper was ſix Days before the *Paſſover*, ver. 1. that, only two, *Matth.* xxvi. 2. *Mark* xiv. 1. and, if the Suppers were not the ſame, the *Mary* that

anointed *Chriſt*'s Feet here, and the Woman that anointed his Head there, were not the ſame.

NARD, or *Spikenard*, is a Plant that grows in the *Indies*, with a very ſlender Root, a Stalk ſmall and long, and ſeveral Ears, or Spikes, even with the Ground, from whence it has the Name of *Spikenard*. The *Italian Nard* (if it be right) muſt be of a yellowiſh Colour, inclining towards Purple, with long Spikes, and the Briſtles of its Spikes large and odoriferous. Of the Blade, or Spike of this Nard, the Ancients were uſed to make a Perfume of great Eſteem, and, when genuine, very precious. *Pliny* tells us, there were nine ſeveral Herbs which imitated *Nard*, and that the great Price it carried, tempted many to adulterate it; but where it was found pure and unſophiſticated, there it obtained the Name of *Nardus piſtica*, which is the Epithet that occurs in *Mark* xiv. 3. and *John* xii. 3. unleſs, as ſome think, it may be a Miſtake in the Copiers for *Spicata*.

As the *Roman* Penny was Seven Pence Half-penny of our Money, ſo three hundred Pence muſt amount to nine Pounds ſeven Shillings and Six-pence, the Value of this precious Box of Ointment.

IT was a Cuſtom, in theſe *Eaſtern* Countries, for Kings and great Perſons, to have their Bodies, at their Funerals, embalmed with Odours, and ſweet Perfumes; and, in Alluſion hereunto, our Saviour here declares of *Mary*, that ſhe, to teſtify her Faith in him, as her King, and Lord, had, as it were before-hand, embalmed his Body with precious Ointment for his Burial.

NEVER was there Rage and Malice more unreaſonable than that which prompted the Rulers to deſtroy *Lazarus*; for be it admitted that *Chriſt* had broke the *Sabbath*, and ſpoken Blaſphemy, yet what had *Lazarus* done? No Crime was ever alledged againſt him, and yet theſe Rulers of the People conſpire to put him to Death, merely to preſerve their own Ho-

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nour and Reputation. But ſee the Providence of God, which, notwithſtanding all their Contrivances, was pleaſed to preſerve him, as a Monument of his Glory, and a Teſtimony of the Miracle which *Jeſus* performed on him, thirty Years after our Saviour's Death.

BETHPHAGE ſignifies the *Houſe of Figs*, or *Dates*, and might, very probably, have its Name from the ſeveral Trees of theſe Kinds, that grew there. It was a ſmall Village of the Prieſts, ſituate in Mount *Olivet*, and, as it ſeems, ſomewhat nearer *Jeruſalem* than *Bethany*.

MOUNT *Olivet*, doubtleſs, had its Name from the great Number of Olive-trees, that grew upon it. It lay a little without *Jeruſalem*, on the *Eaſt* Side of it, about five Furlongs from the City, ſays *Joſephus*, but he muſt be underſtood of the very neareſt Part of it, ſince St. *Luke* makes the Diſtance to be a *Sabbath-day*'s Journey, *i. e.* eight Furlongs, or a Mile, unleſs we ſuppoſe that he means the Summit of the Hill, from which our Saviour then aſcended, *Acts* i. 12. Mr. *Maundrel* tells us, that he, and his Company, going out of *Jeruſalem*, at St. *Stephen*'s Gate, and croſſing the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, began immediately to aſcend the Mountain; that, being got above two thirds of the Way up, they came to certain Grotto's, cut, with intricate Windings, and Caverns, under Ground, which were called the *Sepulchres of the Prophets*; that a little higher up were twelve arched Vaults, under Ground, ſtanding ſide by ſide, and built in Memory of the Apoſtles, who are ſaid to have compiled their Creed in this Place; that, ſixty Paces higher, they came to the Place where *Chriſt* is ſaid to have uttered his Prophecy concerning the final Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*; and, a little on the Right-hand, to another, where he is ſaid to have dictated, a ſecond Time, the *Lord's Prayer* to his Diſciples; that, ſomewhat higher,

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is the Cave of a Saint, called *Pelagia*; a little above that a Pillar, denoting the Place where an Angel gave the bleſſed *Virgin* three Days Warning of her Death; and, at the Top of all, the Place of our bleſſed Lord's Aſcenſion.

IT is well remarked by *Grotius*, that ſuch Animals as were never employed in the Service of Men, were wont to be choſen for ſacred Purpoſes, inſomuch that the very *Heathens* thought thoſe Things, and Sacrifices, moſt proper for the Service of their Gods, which had never been put to profane Uſes. Thus the *Philiſtines* returned the Ark, in a new Cart, drawn by Heifers, that had never before undergone the Yoke, 1 *Sam.* vi. 7. But the chief Deſign, that our Saviour might have, in the Orders which he gave his Diſciples, was, that the Prophecy might, by this Means, receive its full Completion: *Tell ye the Daughters of* Sion, *behold thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and ſitting upon an Aſs, and a Colt the Foal of an Aſs.* The former Part of the Verſe is taken from *Iſa.* lxii. 11. and the latter, from *Zach.* ix. 9. Both by the *Jews* are acknowledged to relate to the *Meſſiah*, and, with regard to the latter, *R. Joſeph* was wont to ſay, "May the "*Meſſiah* come, and may I be worthy to ſit under "the Shadow of the Tail of his Aſs.

A GREAT Conteſt there is among learned Men, whether our Lord rode upon the Aſs, or the Colt, or on both alternately. Thoſe, who contend for his riding on both, obſerve from the Words of the Prophet *Zachariah*, Chap. ix. 9. that mention is made of riding both *upon an Aſs, and a Colt, the Foal of an Aſs*; and from St. *Matthew*, Chap. xxi. 7. they obſerve farther, that the Diſciples having brought the *Aſs, and the Colt*, which our Saviour had ſent them for, *put on them their Cloaths, and ſet him thereon.* Since therefore the Relation of St. *Matthew* thus literally agrees with the Prophecy, our Saviour did ride upon the Aſs, as well as the Colt, they ſee

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no Reaſon, why theſe Texts ſhould be taken in their moſt plain and obvious Meaning, and do thence infer, that, for the more exact fulfilling of the Prophecy, our Saviour did actually ride, Part of the Way upon the one, and the remaining Part upon the other. The Generality of the Interpreters, however, are againſt this. They ſuppoſe, that as there was no Occaſion for our Saviour's riding upon both, in ſo ſhort a Journey; and, as the other three *Evangeliſts* only make mention of the Colt, there ſeems to be a Neceſſity for admitting of the Figure called *Enallage Numeri*, in this Place; and that, as when we read, that the *Ark reſted on the Mountains of* Ararat, we underſtand that only upon *one of them*; ſo here when St. *Matthew* tells us, that the Diſciples brought the *Aſs, and the Colt, and put their Cloaths on them*, that is, *upon one of them*, i. e. the Colt, as the Words of the Prophecy itſelf will fairly bear: Nor was there any other Reaſon for bringing the Mother along with it, but that Foals will not uſually go without their Dams.

VERY remarkable is our Saviour's Preſcience, even as to the moſt minute Matters, in the Orders which he gives his Diſciples, *viz.* 1. You ſhall find a Colt; 2. On which no Man ever ſat; 3. Bound with his Mother; 4. In *Bivio*, or where two Ways meet; 5. As you enter into the Village; 6. The Owners of which will, at firſt, ſeem unwilling that you ſhall unbind him; 7. But when they hear, that I had need of him, they will let him go. And no leſs remarkable is the chearful Obedience of theſe Diſciples to a Command, which carnal Reaſoning might have ſtarted many Objections againſt, and which nothing leſs than a ſtedfaſt Perſuaſion, that he, who ſent the Meſſage, would be ſure to give Succeſs to it, could have prevailed upon them to execute, as they did, without any Demur, or Delay.

AT the Feaſt of the Tabernacles, it was a Cuſtom among the *Jews*, not only to ſing *Hoſanna's* with the

the greateſt Joy, but alſo to carry Palm-Branches in their Hands, *Lev.* xxiii. 40. and to deſire (as the *Jews* ſtill wiſh, at the Celebration of this Feaſt) that they may rejoice in this Manner, at the Coming of the *Meſſiah*. Nor was it only at this Feſtival, but upon any other Occaſion of ſolemn Rejoicing, that the *Jews* made uſe of this Ceremony: For ſo we find, that upon the Enemies evacuating the Tower of *Jeruſalem*, *Simon* and his Men, *entered into it, with Thankſgiving and Branches of Palm-trees, and with Harps and Cymbals, and with Viols and Hymns, and Songs*. Nay, the very ſame Manner of expreſſing their Joy prevailed among other Nations, as well as the *Jews*; for ſo *Herodotus* relates, that they, who went before *Xerxes*, as he paſſed over the *Helleſpont*, ſtrowed the Way with Myrtle-branches: And, therefore we need leſs wonder, that we find ſuch of the Company, as were, by our Bleſſed Saviour's Miracles, convinced of his being their King, and the promiſed *Meſſiah*, teſtifying their Joy upon this his Inauguration into his Kingdom, in ſuch a Manner as they, as well as other Nations, upon ſuch joyful Occaſions, were accuſtomed to.

IT was a common Practice among the People of the *Eaſt*, upon the Approach of their Kings and Princes, to ſpread their Veſtments upon the Ground, for them to tread or ride over. In Conformity to which Cuſtom, we find the Captains, when they proclaimed *Jehu* King, putting their Garments under him; and *Plutarch* relating, that when *Cato* left his Soldiers, to return to *Rome*, they ſpread their Cloaths in the Way, which was an Honour (as he obſerves) then done to few Emperors. But the *Jews*, that accompanied our Saviour at this Time, looked upon him, as greater than any Emperor, as a Prince that was come to reſcue them from the *Roman* Yoke, and reduce all Nations under their Subjection; and therefore, in this Manner, they choſe to teſtify their Homage and Veneration to their univerſal Monarch, making

making now a publick Entry into his Capital of *Jeruſalem.*

HOSANNA, or rather *Hoſa-na*, is an *Hebrew* Word, which ſignifies, *Save, I beſeech thee*, and was a common Acclamation, which the *Jews* uſed in their paſt Deliverance from *Egypt*, but in hopes likewiſe of a future one, by the Coming of the *Meſſiah.* Now the Reaſon why the Acclamations, upon this Occaſion, ran rather in theſe Words, than in the common Form of, *Long live the King*, or the like, was, becauſe in the Character which the Prophet gives of the *Meſſiah*, he is called a *Saviour*, or one bringing Salvation to them, *Zech.* ix. 9. And therefore, to ſhew the Excellency of this, above all other Kings, the People addreſs him in Words, taken from the *Pſalmiſt*, *Help us now, O Lord, ſend us now Proſperity*, Pſal. cxviii. 25. But, becauſe *Hoſanna* is likewiſe a Form of Bleſſing; and in the Inauguration of Princes, People are always pleaſed with the rightful Succeſſion; therefore they adjoin, *Hoſanna to the Son of* David, *i. e.* the Lord proſper and heap Favours and Bleſſings upon him. Now, becauſe God promiſed the *Jewiſh* Nation a King, deſcended from that Royal Line, therefore they continue their good Wiſhes, *Bleſſed is he that cometh in the Name of the Lord*; and becauſe again it is natural for Men, in ſuch Tranſports, to reiterate their joyful Acclamations, even, as if they deſired to make them reach Heaven, as well as Earth, therefore it is added, *Hoſanna in the Higheſt.*

BETWEEN Mount *Olivet* and the City of *Jeruſalem*, there lay nothing but only the Valley of *Jehoſaphat*, through which ran the Brook *Kedron.*

THE very Stones would proclaim his Praiſe, is a proverbial Expreſſion, and ſignifies no more, than that God was determined to glorify our Saviour that Day; and therefore, if theſe Followers ſhould be prevailed upon to hold their Peace, and ſay nothing of his Praiſe, God would find out ſome other Means

(though not ſo competent, perhaps,) to make it effectually be known.

THE Tears which our Saviour ſhed, upon his viewing the City and Temple, were ſuch as proceeded from a profound Charity, and deep Commiſeration of the Evils that were coming upon *Jeruſalem*; in both which Virtues he came to be an Example to us, and therefore his Behaviour in this Reſpect, could not be unworthy of himſelf. They farther ſhew, that the Calamities which befel that impious City, might have been avoided, had they made a right Uſe of the Time of their Viſitation, otherwiſe, his Tears might rather be looked upon as the Tears of a Crocodile, than thoſe of true Charity and Commiſeration.

How exactly this Prediction concerning the Miſeries that ſhould befal *Jeruſalem*, was fulfilled by the *Romans*, we may learn by the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian; who not only tells us, that on this very Mount *Olivet*, where our Lord ſpake theſe Words, the *Romans* firſt pitched their Tents, when they came to the final Overthrow of *Jeruſalem*; but that, when *Veſpaſian* began the Siege of it, he encompaſſed the City round about, and kept them in on every Side; that to this Purpoſe (how impracticable ſoever the Enterprize might ſeem) *Titus* prevailed with the Soldiers to build a Wall of thirty-nine Furlongs, quite round the City, with thirteen Turrets on it, which to the Wonder of the World, was compleated in three Days; and that, when this was done, all Poſſibility of eſcaping was cut off, and the greateſt Diſtreſs that ever befel a City, enſued, whereof that Author gives us a very lively, but moſt tragical Account.

How exactly this was likewiſe fulfilled, that *one Stone ſhould not be left on another*, the ſame Hiſtorian relates, *viz.* that *Titus* having ordered the Soldiers to lay the City level with the Ground, and to leave nothing ſtanding but three of the moſt famous Turrets,

rets, that over-topped the reſt, as Monuments to Poſterity, of the *Roman* Power and Conduct in taking the Place; his Orders were ſo punctually executed, and all the reſt laid ſo flat, that the Place looked as if it had never been inhabited.

THE Word *Viſitation* may be taken either in a good or bad Senſe; for either the Mercies or Judgments of God; but here it denotes the former, and particularly the Diſpenſation of the Goſpel firſt by the Miniſtry of *John*, then by the Preaching of *Chriſt* himſelf, and afterwards by the Labours of his Apoſtles and Diſciples.

CHAP. IV.

From our LORD's *laſt Entry into* Jeruſalem, *to his Aſcenſion into Heaven; containing the Term of ſix Weeks and five Days.*

UPON our Lord's Entry into *Jeruſalem*, with ſuch a vaſt Retinue of People, the Citizens were alarmed, and began to enquire, who this great Perſon was? To which the Multitude, that accompanied him, anſwered aloud, that it was *Jeſus*, the Prophet of *Nazareth*, a Town in *Galilee*. Having therefore permitted his Kingdom and divine Authority to be thus proclaimed by others, he proceeded, in the next Place, to exert himſelf: For going to the Temple, and there looking about him, he found the *Court of the Gentiles* notoriouſly profaned and diſhonoured by Trading and Merchandize. That therefore he might end, as he had begun his Miniſtry with the Reformation of his Father's Houſe, he drove out all the Buyers and Sellers (as he did three Years before) from the ſacred Ground; he overthrew the Tables of the Money-changers, and the Stalls of thoſe that ſold Doves; telling them, that they had made the Temple, which was deſervedly called an *Houſe of Prayer*, a *Den of Thieves*. And to let the People ſee, that he had both Commiſſion and Authority to act as he did, he cured, in that Inſtant, many blind and lame Perſons that were brought to him into the Temple.

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THE People, indeed, were filled with Admiration at the Sight of theſe Things; but the *chief Prieſts* and *Scribes*, when they ſaw the Miracles which he wrought, and heard the Acclamations of the Children, who cried out in the Temple *Hoſanna to the Son of* David! were greatly enraged, and diſcovered their Anger, by aſking him, *If he heard what they ſaid?* But he ſilenced their Queſtion, by ſhewing them, that what was ſo diſpleaſing to them, did really fulfil the Scriptures, particularly that Paſſage in the *Pſalmiſt*, where it is ſaid, that *out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings thou haſt perfected Praiſe.* This Anſwer, however, did but enrage them the more, and put them upon ſeeking all Occaſions to deſtroy him; tho' their Dread of the People, who heard him with the greateſt Eagerneſs and Attention, was ſome Check upon their Malice.

THE *Jews* were not the only Perſons who came up to *Jeruſalem* at the Paſſover; for many devout *Greeks* uſed likewiſe to reſort thither, at that Feaſt; and ſome of theſe being deſirous to have a Sight of *Chriſt*, addreſſed themſelves to *Philip*, one of the Apoſtles, and he, by the Aſſiſtance of *Andrew*, had them introduced. Our Lord was, at that Time, diſcourſing to the Diſciples of many Things relating to his Paſſion, and particularly of the Efficacy of his Death, and what a powerful Means it would prove to convert the World to his Religion; more powerful, indeed, than his Life could poſſibly be, even as Corn, tho' it dies in the Ground, when ſown, riſes again with a vaſt Abundance and Increaſe. While he was thus diſcourſing of his Death, he ſeemed on a Sudden to be ſeized with a natural Horror at his approaching Hour, and was going to requeſt of God a Reprieve from it; but then recollecting, that for this Purpoſe it was, that he came into the World, he changed his Petition, and with a reſolved Acquieſcence in his good Pleaſure, deſired of him, in what Method he ſhould think moſt proper, to glorify his Name; whereupon

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he was anſwered by a Voice from Heaven, (which ſome of the Company took for a Clap of Thunder, and others for a Angel's Speaking to him) *that he had glorified it, and would glorify it again.*

THIS Voice, he told them, was not ſo much for his Information in the Will of Heaven, as it was for their Conviction of his divine *Miſſion*; and ſo he went on diſcourſing to them of his Death, and the beneficial Effects of it, until ſome of them perceiving, in what he ſaid, an Inconſiſtency (as they thought) with ſome Paſſages of Scripture, told him, that they could not rightly comprehend what he meant by Death, ſince ſome Propheſies had aſſured them, that the Meſſiah was to *live for ever*. But to this Objection he made no other Reply, than that it well behoved them to make good Uſe of his Inſtructions, for the ſhort Time they were to have them; and ſo he withdrew from them, as well perceiving that neither his divine Diſcourſes, nor miraculous Cures could gain the Faith of any, except the Populace; for tho' ſome of their Rulers did believe in him, yet ſuch was their Timidity, that they durſt not declare it openly, for Fear of *Excommunication*, and becauſe *they loved the Praiſe of Men, more than the Praiſe of God.*

TOWARDS the Evening, however, he returned again to the Temple, and exhorted the People to believe in him, as a Meſſenger ſent from God to offer Salvation to Mankind; and in caſe that they perſiſted in their Infidelity, he threatened them with divine Vengeance in the laſt Day, when the very Goſpel, which he then preached to them, would riſe up in Judgment againſt them, and condemn them; and with theſe Words he left the Temple, and taking his Apoſtles with him, returned to *Bethany*, where he lodged that Night.

THE next Morning, as he returned to *Jeruſalem*, finding himſelf a little hungry, he went to a Fig-tree, that was in the Way, in hopes of finding ſome Fruit upon it: But when he found none, to ſignify his Almighty

Almighty Power, he curſed the Tree; and ſo proceeding to the Temple, began again to clear it of all the Traders that were got again into it, and there continued all the Day long, teaching and inſtructing the People. While he was doing this, the *chief Prieſts*, *Scribes* and *Rulers* of the People, knowing that he had no Commiſſion from the *Sanhedrim*, came and demanded of him, by what Authority he proceeded in that Manner; but, inſtead of anſwering their Queſtion directly, he put another to them, *viz.* Whether the Baptiſm of *John* was of divine, or only of human Inſtitution? To ſay that it was of divine Inſtitution, would be to accuſe themſelves of Impiety, and Incredulity; and to ſay that it was purely human, would be to provoke the People (who all looked upon him as a Prophet) to ſtone them; and therefore, in this *Dilemma*, they concluded, that Ignorance would be the beſt Anſwer, and thereupon declared, that they could not tell; to which our Saviour rejoined, "Neither is it neceſſary for me to give you "an Account of my Commiſſion and Authority, "ſince you ſeem to grant, that a Man may lawfully "preach and baptize, and entertain Diſciples, as "*John* did, without the Appointment and Per-"miſſion of the *Sanhedrim*." And ſo he proceeded, in ſeveral Parables (ſuch as the Parable of the *two Sons*, that of the *wicked Huſbandmen*, and that of the *Gueſts* invited to the *Marriage-feaſt*) to upbraid them with their Hypocriſy, Cruelty, and Contempt of Religion, and for theſe to denounce the ſevere Judgments of God againſt them.

Now let us explain what we have thus far advanced.

THE Money-changers, whoſe Tables our Saviour overthrew, were not unlike our Merchants or Bankers, who deal in Bills of Exchange, and either remit Money to foreign Places, or anſwer ſuch Draughts, as, by their Correſpondents abroad, are made upon them: And conſidering that the *Jews* (how far ſoever they

they lived from it) were obliged to repair to *Jeruſalem*, there to offer their Sacrifices, and pay their half Shekel, for the Uſe of the Temple, *Exod.* xxx. 13. the Inſtitution of ſuch Dealers in Money was highly neceſſary, that the *Jews*, in their ſeveral Diſperſions, who were to come up to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, paying their Money the Merchants at home, might have it, to anſwer their Occaſions, ſafe from Thieves, and from the Trouble of Carriage, when they arrived at *Jeruſalem*. Whether therefore the Buſineſs of theſe Money-changers was only to return Money from diſtant Parts, or to change foreign Money into current Coin, or larger Money into leſs Pieces, or perhaps to do all this, there was certainly nothing blame-worthy in the Profeſſion, had it not been for ſome intervening Abuſe. In like Manner, it may be ſaid of thoſe, who bought or ſold Cattle for Sacrifices; ſince it ſhould have been highly inconvenient for every Worſhipper, who lived at a conſiderable Diſtance, to bring them up with him, ſuch Men were neceſſary in their Way, as were likewiſe the Sellers of Doves, becauſe every *Iſraelite* did not keep this Kind of Birds, and yet no one Creature was ſo often required in Sacrifice, as they. Our Saviour therefore, in this Tranſaction, muſt not be thought to blame all ſuch Traffick in general, but only to find fault in the People for having taken up an improper Place for the Exerciſe of their reſpective Callings: And therefore, to let them know, that it was not out of Paſſion, or any peeviſh Reſentment againſt them, but purely in Obedience to a divine Command, that he made this Reformation, he told them, that it was written, *My Houſe ſhall be called an Houſe of Prayer*. This is the Character which the Prophet *Iſaiah* gives of it, Chap. lvi. 7. and if it be an Houſe appointed for Prayer, and other religious Officers, than is it no proper Place for *the Tables of Money-changers, and the Seats of thoſe that ſell Doves*, who have the Markets of *Jeruſalem*, and their own Shops and Houſes to trade in.

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THE Expreſſion, *a Den of Thieves*, is thought by ſome to be an Alluſion to thoſe Gangs of Robbers, which, at this Time, infeſted *Judea*, and uſed to hide themſelves in Holes, and Dens of the Mountains, as appears from the Hiſtory of *Joſephus* in ſeveral Places: But our Lord here plainly refers to that Paſſage in *Jeremiah*, where the Prophet introduces God complaining, *Is this Houſe, which is called by my Name, become a Den of Robbers in your Eyes? Behold, I even have ſeen it, ſaith the Lord*, Chap. vii. 11. But how could the Houſe of God become a Den of Robbers? How could ſuch Violence be commited in ſo ſacred a Place? St. *Jerom*, in his Commentary upon *Matth.* xxi. 12, 13. aſcribes all this to the Avarice of the Prieſts, and gives us a lively Deſcription of the ſeveral Artifices, whereby they endeavoured to enrich themſelves: "In the Temple of "*Jeruſalem*, ſays he, the fineſt, and the moſt ſpa- "cious in the whole World, whither *Jews* aſſem- "bled almoſt from all Countries, Sacrifices of dif- "ferent Kinds, ſome from the Rich, and others "from the poorer Sort, were preſcribed by the Law; "but, becauſe, thoſe who came from afar, often "wanted ſuch Sacrifices, the Prieſts took the Advan- "tage to buy up all theſe Beaſts, which were ap- "pointed for this Purpoſe; and, having ſold them "to thoſe that wanted, received them at their "Hands back again. Becauſe ſome, who came to "worſhip, were ſo very poor, that they had not "Money enough to purchaſe ſo much as the leſſer "Sacrifices, which were Birds, to remedy this Incon- "veniency, the Prieſts ſet up Bankers in one of the "Courts of the Temple, to lend them Money upon "Security; But, finding that they could not do this, "without tranſgreſſing the Law, which forbad "Uſury, they had Recourſe to another Device, "which was to appoint a kind of Pawnbrokers, "inſtead of Bankers, *i. e.* Men, who, for the Ad- "vance of a ſmall Sum, took Fruits, Herbs, and

" other Conſumables, inſtead of Uſe-money. Our " Lord therefore having obſerved this Way of " Traffick, which the Prieſts had ſet up in his Father's " Houſe, not only expelled their Agents, but ar- " raigned them likewiſe for a Pack of Thieves, *for* " *he is a Robber*, ſays the Father, *who makes Lucre of* " *Religion, and whoſe Worſhip is, not ſo much of the* " *Veneration he has for God, as the Opportunity of* " *making his own Intereſt and Advantage.*"

THESE Words, *Out of the Mouth of Babes and Sucklings thou haſt perfected Praiſe*, are cited from *Pſal.* viii. 2. and ſeem to vary a little from the Original, which is thus rendered, *Out of the Mouth of the very Babes and Sucklings thou has ordained Strength.* But, when it is conſidered, that the only *Strength*, which can proceed from the Mouth of Children, muſt be *Praiſe*, or Words put into their Mouths, to celebrate the Praiſes of the *Meſſiah*, the Phraſe in the *Pſalmiſt*, and in the *Evangeliſt*, muſt needs mean the ſame Thing; and our Saviour, in the Application of it to chief Prieſts and Scribes, ſeem to inſinuate, " That the Acclamations of the Children " were not fortuitous, but by a divine Inſtinct, and " for the fulfilling of an antient Prophecy; and that " therefore their declaring him to be the *Meſſiah*, or " the Son of *David*, ſhould be looked upon as a " Kind of Call from Heaven, to inform and inſtruct " them in what they were to do."

WHO the *Grecians* were, who reſorted to *Jeruſalem* to worſhip, the beſt of our Commentators are not agreed. Some are of Opinion, that they were mere *Gentiles*, who, either out of Curioſity, *viz.* to ſee the Magnificence of the Temple, the Solemnities of the Feaſt, or the Perſon of *Jeſus*, of whoſe Fame they had heard ſo much; or perhaps out of a Principle of Devotion, and to worſhip the God of *Iſrael*, might at this Time, reſort to *Jeruſalem:* For the *Pagan* Religion, which admitted a Plurality of Gods, reſtrained none as they were not thereby tempted

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to abandon thoſe of their own. Others imagine, that they were real *Jews*, who being ſcattered in *Grecian* Provinces, after the Conqueſts, which *Alexander the Great* and his Succeſſors made of the *Jews*, ſtill continued in thoſe Countries, but kept ſo cloſe to their ancient Religion, as to come, in great Numbers, to *Jeruſalem*, upon the Return of every Paſſover. Theſe were generally called *Helleniſts*: And, that there was great Plenty of them in their ſeveral Provinces of *Aſia* is manifeſt from St. *Peter*'s Addreſs of his firſt Epiſtle to the *Strangers* (as he calls them) who were ſcattered through *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia Minor*, and *Bithynia*, 1 *Pet.* i. 1. but the moſt general Opinion is, that theſe *Greeks* were *Proſelytes of the Gate*, who worſhipped the God of Heaven and Earth, lived among the *Jews*, and conformed to their political Laws, but would not not engage in Circumciſion, or the Obſervance of their Ceremonies; and they came to *Jeruſalem* at this Time, not becauſe they were permitted to celebrate the Feaſt along with the *Jews*, becauſe they were indulged the Privilege to behold their Solemnities, and to pay thier Adorations to the Creator of the Univerſe (even while the *Jews* were in the Height of their publick Worſhip) in the Court of the *Gentiles*, as appears from the Caſe of the Eunuch of Queen *Candace*, Acts viii. 27.

THESE *Greeks*, ſays *Grotius*, ſeem to have been *Syrophœnicians*, who dwelt perhaps about *Tyre* and *Sidon*, and ſo might eaſily be acquainted with the *Galileans*, with whom they had Commerce, and with *Philip* of *Bethſaida*, to whom they made Application for Acceſs to *Chriſt*.

OUR Saviour's Words, upon comparing his Death to Corn ſown in the Ground, are not amiſs paraphraſed in this Manner, "Look, as you ſee in your "ordinary Huſbandry, the Grains of Wheat are "firſt buried in the Earth, and loſe their Form, be"fore they ſpring and ſhoot up again, and bring

" forth Fruit; ſo it muſt be with me. I muſt be " firſt lifted up, before I ſhall draw Men after me; " I muſt firſt be crucified, before my Goſpel ſhall " be preached to all Nations, and the Fulneſs of the " *Gentiles* ſhall come in; but when I am dead, " and have riſen, then ſhall ye bear abundant " Fruit."

THAT Men might not have it to ſay, that our Bleſſed Saviour, in Point of Suffering, was no proper Example for our Imitation, becauſe he had no Dread of Death, or Senſe of Pain, to make Sufferings diſtaſteful to him, whereas we are moſt tenderly affected with theſe Things, he herein ſhews us, that he had the ſame natural Concern for Life, and Dread of Death, that we have, only that he overruled them by a Deſire of promoting his Father's Glory.

THE only Way of Revelation, which the *Jews*, ſince the *Babyloniſh* Captivity, and Extinction of their Prophets, *Haggai*, *Zechariah*, and *Malachi*, pretend to, is that of *Bath-Koll*, or the *Daughter of a Voice*, ſo called, becauſe it has ſome Reſemblance (though as to its Diſtinctneſs, but an imperfect one) of that Voice, which was uttered from the *Holy of Holies*, when the Lord ſpake to *Moſes*; and (according to them) it is the Will of God revealed in Thunder from Heaven; and therefore, when our Saviour was anſwered by a Voice from Heaven, ſome of the Company thought it thundered, and others that an Angel ſpake, yet neither of them were miſtaken, becauſe in this *Bath-Koll*, there was alſo Thunder joined with an articulate Voice.

I HAVE glorified it (meaning his Name) by cauſing my Glory to be publiſhed and proclaimed in the World, by thy Preaching, and by the Miracles which I have given in Teſtimony of thy Miſſion; *and I will glorify it again*, by thy Reſurrection and Exaltation to the *Right-hand of Glory*, by the Miſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon thy Apoſtles, and by their

their carrying the *Sounds of the Goſpel even unto the Ends of the Earth.*

THE Prophecies, from whence the *Jews* may be ſuppoſed to have drawn the Concluſion, *that the* Meſſiah *was to live for ever*, are, 2 *Sam.* vii. 16. where God, by the Mouth of *Nathan*, promiſes *David, Thine Houſe, and thy Kingdom ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever before thee, thy Throne ſhall be eſtabliſhed for ever*; in much the ſame Words, wherein he had ſworn unto *David* himſelf, *Pſal.* lxxxix. 30. *His Seed will I make to endure for ever, and his Throne as the Days of Heaven.* To the ſame Purpoſe they found the Prophet *Iſaiah* promiſing, Chap. ix. 7. *My Servant* David *ſhall be their King for ever, and of his Government there ſhall be no End:* But what ſeemed to expreſs the Matter in the cleareſt Terms was this Paſſage in *Daniel*, chap. vii. 13, 14. *and behold one like the Son of Man came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days*, &c. *and there was given him Dominion, and Glory, and a Kingdom*, &c. *his Dominion, is an everlaſting Dominion, which ſhall not paſs away, and his Kingdom that which ſhall not be deſtroyed.* Thus the *Jews* wrongfully applied to the Perſon of the *Meſſiah*, the Things, which related to his Kingdom; but then they gave little or no heed to what the ſame Prophets ſaid of the Body, wherein the *Meſſiah* was to ſuffer, and of his Hands and Feet, which were to be pierced, *Pſal.* xxii. 18. xl. 6. of his giving up his Life a Sacrifice for Sin, *Iſaiah* liii. 12. and of his being cut off, but not for himſelf, *Dan.* ix. 26. all which was not incompatible with his abiding for ever, ſeeing that, after his Sufferings, he was to riſe again, *Pſal.* xli. 10. and enter into Glory, 1 *Pet.* i. 11. So that, by comparing theſe Things together, they might have as eaſily removed this Scruple, eſpecially when he had told them ſo often, and they ſo well remembered that he had told them, that, *after three Days, he would riſe again.*

IT is pretended by ſome, that the Perſon, who preached in the Temple, was to have a Licence from the *Sanhedrim*, but that any might ſpeak publickly in the Synagogues without any ſuch Authority; becauſe we find our Saviour preaching in the latter, almoſt every *Sabbath-day*, without any Moleſtation. However this be, 'tis certainly a vain Queſtion, for the Chief Prieſts and Rulers to aſk our Lord, *by whoſe Authority he did thoſe Things*, after they had ſeen his Miracles, and knew that he claimed his Commiſſion from God.

BY the *Man* in the Parable, is ſignified *God*, and by his *two Sons*, the *Jews* and the *Gentiles*. The *Jews* are the ſecond Son; they promiſed to God a perfect Obedience, and yet did nothing: The *Gentiles* are the other Son, who, at firſt, refuſed to obey and give themſelves up to Idolatry, and all Manner of Wickedneſs, but upon the Preaching of the Goſpel, repented; and, after their Converſion, applied themſelves in earneſt to do the Will of God. The Parable, according to our Lord's own Interpretation of it, *Matth.* xxi. 32. is applicable likewiſe to two Kinds of *Jews*, the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, who pretended to ſo much Religion, and ſuch mighty Zeal for the Performance of the Law, when in Reality, they obſerved none of its weightier Precepts; and the *Publicans* and *Sinners*, who though at firſt they lived in Practices quite abhorrent to the Precepts of Religion, yet, upon the Preaching of *John the Baptiſt*, were ſeveral of them converted, and attending to the Doctrine of *Chriſt* and his Apoſtles, in Proceſs of Time, became obedient to their heavenly Will, *ver.* 31.

FOR the Explication of the Parable of the *wicked Huſbandmen*, we muſt obſerve, That the Houſeholder here, *Matth.* xxi. 33. is Almighty God, and the Vineyard is the *Jewiſh* People, conſidered in their ſpiritual Capacity; that his planting and hedging it about, ſignifies his peculiar Favour and Providence, in

in communicating to them his Will, and by the Laws and Ordinances peculiar to themſelves, diſtinguiſhing them from all other Nations, to be his own People; that the *Wine-preſs* and *Tower*, and other ſuitable Conveniencies, denote the *Temple* and *Altar*, which he built among them, together with all thoſe Advantages and Opportunities of ſerving him acceptably which he afforded them; that the *Huſbandmen*, to whom this Vineyard was let out, were the *Prieſts* and *Levites*, the *Doctors* and *Rulers* of that Church and People, who are here repreſented wanting in their Duty, and negligent in cultivating the Vineyard, or inſtructing the People committed to their Charge; that the Fruits are no other than Returns of Duty, proportioned to the Advantages of knowing, and performing it; that the Servants ſent to demand the Fruits, were the Prophets, whom God, from Time to Time, commiſſioned to reprove, exhort, and quicken to their Duty, both Prieſts and People, by Denunciations of Vengeance, and Promiſes of Reward; that the *Son*, whom he ſent at laſt, was our Bleſſed Saviour, whom the *Jewiſh* Prieſts and Rulers treated in no better Manner, than they had done Prophets of old, but, inſtead of reverencing him as the Son of God, and as he proved himſelf to be by divers Manifeſtations of divine Power, put him to a cruel and ignominious Death; and therefore well might the Lord of the Vineyard *deſtroy theſe wicked Men*, &c. as we find from the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian *Joſephus*, as well as other Writers, that God, for their Impiety, brought the *Roman* Armies upon that Nation, and by them, burnt their City and Temple, deſtroyed and diſperſed the People, and carried his Goſpel to the *Gentiles*, *the other Huſbandmen, who ſhould render him the Fruits in their Seaſon*, ver. 41.

THE *King*, in the Parable of the *Marriage Feaſt*, repreſents God the Father; the *Son*, the Lord *Jeſus Chriſt* (who is frequently deſcribed as the Spouſe of his Church) and the *Marriage-Feaſt*, the Diſpenſatio:

of the *Goſpel*. The *Gueſts*, that were at firſt invited to the Feaſt, were the *Jews*; the *Servants* ſent forth to call them, were the *Prophets*, *John the Baptiſt*, and the *Apoſtles*; upon their Refuſal, the other *Gueſts*, brought in to ſupply their Room, were the *Gentiles*; and the Perſon who wanted the *Wedding-garment*, is an Emblem of all thoſe, who profeſs and receive, but do not live up to the Principles of *Chriſt*'s Religion.

HERE let us reſume the Story.

THE *Phariſees*, who had as great a Share in the Application of theſe Parables, as any other, went away much enraged, and with a firm Reſolution to find out ſome Occaſion againſt him. To this Purpoſe therefore, they ſent ſome of their Diſciples, together with the *Herodians*, to propound this inſidious Queſtion to him, *Whether it was lawful for them to pay Tribute to* Cæſar, *or not?* never doubting, but that, which Way ſoever he anſwered his Buſineſs was done; if in the Affirmative, the Multitude would deteſt him, as a Betrayer of their ancient Liberties; if in the Negative, the *Herodians* would then accuſe him, as a Rebel againſt the Emperor *Tiberius*: But he, knowing their treacherous Deſign, demanded a Sight of the Tribute-money, and when he acknowledged that the Signature on it was *Cæſar*'s, he ſent them away, quite confounded with this Anſwer, *Render therefore unto* Cæſar, *the Things that are* Cæſar's, *and unto God, the Things that are God's.*

UPON the Defeat given to theſe two Parties, the *Sadducees* came to him with a Queſtion, and a Difficulty, that they thought inſurmountable. For, as they had no Belief of a Reſurrection, they put a Caſe to him of one Woman, who, according to the Direction of their Law had been married to ſeven Brothers ſucceſſively, and thereupon deſire to know whoſe Wife ſhe was to be at the general Reſurrection? In Anſwer to which our Lord gave them to underſtand, that though Marriage was neceſſary in this State, in order to raiſe up a Poſterity to mortal Man, yet that after the Reſurrection, Men would be immortal

mortal and live like Angels, devoid of Paſſions, and incapable of Decay; and then proved the Reality of the Reſurrection from one of God's Appellations, in a Book, which themſelves allowed to be cannonical.

THE *Phariſees*, hearing the *Sadducees* were ſilenced, began to rally again: and one of their Doctors in hopes to enſnare our Saviour, in caſe he ſhould prefer one Part of the Law above another, deſired to know his Opinion, *which was to be the greateſt Commandment of all?* Whereupon our Lord reduced the whole Law to two general Precepts, of equal Obligation to all Mankind, *the Love of God above all Things*, and *the Love of our Neighbour as ourſelves*; in the former of which we obey the *firſt*, and in the latter the *ſecond* Table of the Law; and with this Anſwer the Doctor was well pleaſed. When our Saviour had thus reſolved all their Queſtions, he in his Turn, at laſt, put this one to them, *viz.* In what Senſe the *Meſſiah* could be *David*'s Son, when *David* himſelf, by divine Inſpiration, called him his Lord? But to this they could give no Anſwer, becauſe they were ignorant, that the *Meſſiah*, as God, was really the Lord of *David*, but as Man, and deſcended from his Family, he was his Son: And after theſe Diſputes (which were the laſt he had with them) he went again, in the Evening, with his Diſciples, to *Bethany*.

HERE it may be proper to take a Review of the foregoing Period of our Hiſtory.

THE *Herodians* are commonly, and moſt probably, ſuppoſed to ſignify the Partiſans, and Favourers of *Herod*; but what their Principle was, as to the Matter now in hand, it is not ſo generally agreed. Some think them Enemies to the *Roman* Government, and that they only watched a favourable Opportunity to make *Herod*'s Family abſolute. Others think them intirely in the Intereſt of the Emperor, as *Herod* himſelf then was; for having, by his Indulgence, been advanced to the Regal State, he acted for and under him, in collecting the Cuſtoms and publick

Dues. This Opinion ſeems the more probably, becauſe it is more agreeable to the *Phariſees* preſent Deſign: For, had they ſent Perſons all of one Sentiment, *Chriſt* might eaſily ſatisfied them all; but now, by ſending Men of different Judgments, they made it impoſſible for him to content both Parties; ſince, in determining for the Payment of the Tribute, he muſt have given Offence to the *Phariſees*, and, in Effect, renounced thoſe Liberties and Privileges, which ſome of the *Jewiſh* Doctors inſiſted upon; and, in pronouncing againſt it, he was ſure to incur the *Herodians* Diſpleaſure, and make himſelf obnoxious to the Juriſdiction of the Civil Sword. The *Herodians* therefore may well be preſumed to have been Perſons of a Principle different to the *Phariſees*, whoſe Addreſs and Cunning, upon this Occaſion, ſeems to have lain chiefly in the Management of the Meſſengers.

THE State of the Queſtion, *Whether it was lawful for them to pay Tribute to* Cæſar, *or not*, truly taken, ſeems to be this;——The Government of the *Jews* had fallen into the Hands of the *Maccabees*, and in Succeſſion, to one of them, named *Alexander*. He had two Sons, *Hyrcanus*, and *Ariſtobulus*, the younger of which made War upon the elder, and aſſumed to himſelf the Government. *Hyrcanus*, and his Party, being not able to reſiſt him, called in the Aſſiſtance of the *Romans*. *Pompey*, at their Requeſt, beſieges *Jeruſalem*, and had the Gates ſurrendered to him by a Faction within, that favoured *Hyrcanus*, but *Ariſtobulus* and his Adherents fought it out, till, at laſt, they were vanquiſhed and overpowered. The *Romans* put *Hyrcanus* in Poſſeſſion of the Government; but, at the ſame Time, obliged them to hold it by their Favour and Permiſſion, which laid the Foundation of great and laſting Diſſentions among the *Jews*; ſome ſubmitting to the *Roman* Power, as thinking they had a fair Title both by Conqueſt and Surrender; while others objected, that the Surrender was made

made by a Party only, and not the whole Body of the People; that it was not Conqueſt, but Treachery, which brought *Jeruſalem* to their Mercy; and, conſequently, that they were Uſurpers, and *Hyrcanus* and his Followers, Betrayers of their Country. That which contributed not a little to make this Controverſy ſtill greater, was, what *Joſephus* and *Euſebius* relate concerning *Judas* the *Gaulonite*. He about the Time of the Taxation, in which (as St. *Luke* ſays) our Saviour was born, diſquieted the Minds of many, and repreſented the Decree of *Auguſtus* for that Purpoſe, as a Mark of Infamy and Servitude not to be born. This Man is ſaid to have inſtituted a particular Sect, one of whoſe Tenets was,—That no *Jew* ought to pay Tribute, or to acknowledge any Sovereign Lord, but God only, and that they were his peculiar People, and therefore bound to maintain their Liberty, eſpecially againſt profane and uncircumciſed Pretenders, ſuch as the *Roman* Emperors were. So that, the paying of Tribute to *Cæſar*, was not, at this Time, a Queſtion of meer Curioſity, but a Matter of Moment, with regard to Practice; nor was it a Point of Bravery only, in the Eſteem of the *Phariſees*, and others of that Party, but a Scruple of Conſcience, and a Debate of Religion, whether this Tribute ſhould be paid or not.

EVERY one knows that the *Roman* Emperors were wont to diſperſe their Money through all the Provinces belonging to their Juriſdiction; that this Money was ſtamped with the Image, or Buſt of the Emperor, on one Side; and on the Reverſe, with ſome Figure or other, repreſenting *Victory*, *Plenty*, *Peace*, or the like; and that this Tribute, or Capitation-Tax, (which according to *Ulpian*, the Males from fourteen, and the Females from twelve Years old, were obliged to pay) was uſually collected in this Money, and no other, as the only current Coin at *Rome*.

SOME Interpreters are of Opinion, that our Saviour's Words do not determine *Cæſar*'s Right to demand Tribute; but, ſince the *Jews* had now ſubmitted to the *Roman* Government (as they had formerly done to the *Aſſyrian*) which national Submiſſion (with Promiſe of Fidelity) having now obtained an hundred Years, was a juſt Ground for *Cæſar*'s Right; ſince, beſides this, *Cæſar* had indulged them in the Exerciſe of their Religion, and Enjoyment of their Civil Rights; had fought their Battles, and protected them againſt the common Enemy, the *Arabians*, and *Parthians*, and the like; ſince, more eſpecially, it was a received Maxim among the *Jews*, that wherever the Money of any Perſon was owned, as the current Coin of the Kingdom, there the Inhabitants acknowledged that Perſon to be their Lord and Governor; and ſince the *Jews* accepted, and trafficked with *Cæſar*'s Money, and held it current in all their Payments; our Saviour's Anſwer, *Render therefore to* Cæſar, which is founded upon their own Principles, muſt needs be deemed a poſitive Declaration of *Cæſar*'s Right to receive Tribute, and ſuch other Acknowledgments, as belonged to the State and Dignity of the Poſt, wherein Providence had placed him. It might indeed be objected (ſays *Grotius*, on *Matth.* xxii. 20.) that the *Romans* ruled over the *Jews*, and *Cæſar* over the *Romans*, in Fact only, and without any Right to do ſo, but *Chriſt* ſhews, that this Objection ſignifies nothing to the Matter in hand: For, ſince Peace cannot be ſecured without Forces, nor Forces had without Pay, nor Pay without Taxes or Tribute; it follows, that Tribute ought to be paid to the Perſon actually governing (ſo long as he continues to govern) in Conſideration of the common Safety, and Protection, which are ſecured by the preſent Poſſeſſor of the Government, whoever that Poſſeſſor be.

THE

THE Diſcourſe of the *Sadducees* was founded upon this Miſtake,——That, if there ſhould be a *Reſurrection of the Bodies*, there would neceſſarily follow a Revival of the Relations likewiſe, and that the State of the World to come would be like the State of this preſent World, in which, for the Propagation and Continuance of Mankind, Men and Women marry, and are given in Marriage; which groſs Notion of theirs our Saviour endeavours to rectify.

THE Words, which our Saviour produces in Proof of the Reſurrection, are thoſe which God uſes to *Moſes*, *I am the God of thy Father, the God of* Abraham, *the God of* Iſaac, *and the God of* Jacob, *Exod.* iii. 6. and the Argument which is implied in them is this,——That, ſince to *be the God of any one* is a fœderal Expreſſion, which denotes God to be a kind Benefactor who either doth, or will do Good to ſuch Perſons, as are in his Favour, and under his Protection; ſince *God is not the God of the Dead*, and can have a Regard or Conſideration of ſuch, as are mere *Non-Entities*, or ſo dead, as never to return to Life again; and ſince, in this Life, *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, received no ſuch ſignal Kindneſſes from the Almighty, as anſweres the emphatical Expreſſion of his being *their God*, it muſt neceſſarily follow, that God, in declaring himſelf to be *their God*, did ſolemnly engage himſelf to make them happy after this Life, according to what the Author to the *Hebrews* obſerves, *Wherefore God is not aſhamed to be called their God, in that he hath prepared for them a City*, Heb. xi. 16. This Way of arguing was of great Force againſt the *Sudducees*, who denied the Immortality of the Soul, as well as the Reſurrection of the Body; and, at the ſame Time, it fully proves the Reſurrection of the Body: For, ſince the Souls of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, were not the intire Perſons of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, which conſiſted of Bodies as well as Souls, it would from hence follow,

low, that God could truly be their God, *i. e.* their Rewarder and bounteous Benefactor, no other Way, than by a Reſurrection of their Bodies, to be re-united to their proper Souls.

THE Perſon, whom we here render *Doctor*, is, by St. *Matthew*, xxii. 28. called a *Lawyer*, and by St. *Luke*, xx. 29. a *Scribe*; but in this Diverſity of Words there is no Difference of Senſe: For *Scribes* were of two Sorts, or had at leaſt two Offices; the one was, *to ſit in the Chair of* Moſes, *Matth.* xxiii. 2. *i. e.* to read and interpret the Law of *Moſes* to the People; the other, to expound to them the Traditions, which they pretended to have received from their Forefathers. The Name of *Scribe* they ſeem to have derived from *Ezra*, (about 500 Years before *Chriſt*) who is ſo frequently ſtiled, *A Scribe of the Law of the Lord, who read in the Book of the Law, and expounded it*, *Ezra* vii. 12. *Neh.* xii. 26. and viii. 2, *&c.* And, becauſe the Traditions which they taught, and obliged the People to obſerve, were called *Laws*, they thence had the Application of *Lawyers*: And, as ſome of the Scribes were the Perſons appointed to copy out the Bible for ſuch as had Occaſion for it, and to take Care of the Preſervation of the Purity of the Text; ſo others employed themſelves in taking the like Pains about the Traditions of the Elders, and from thence very likely (though they were all the ſame Order of Men) they might have different Denominations.

THE Queſtion that this *Jewiſh* Doctor put to our Saviour, *viz. Which was to be accounted the greateſt Commandment of all?* was no frivolous or impertinent one, but what, at this Time divided the greateſt Part of the learned Men among the *Jews*; ſome giving the Preference to the Obſervation of the *Sabbath*: others to the Ordinance of *Circumciſion*, and others to the Precept of *Sacrifices*; never conſidering the great Command recorded in *Deut.* vi. 5. *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy Heart, and with*

with all thy Soul, and with all thy Might, or that other recorded in *Levit.* xix. 18. *Thou ſhalt love thy Neighbour as thyſelf*, until our Saviour reminded them of them.

THAT by our Neighbour here we are to underſtand every other Perſon, who is capable of Kindneſs from us, or ſtands in need of our Help, is evident from our Saviour's Determination in the Caſe of the *Jew* and the good *Samaritan*, from the Example we are called upon to imitate in this Affection, *viz.* the Love of God and our bleſſed Saviour; and from theſe Evangelical Precepts, which extends this Duty to all Men: But by the *loving our Neighbours as ourſelves*, it is not required, either that we ſhould love him from the ſame inward Principles, which excite our Affection to ourſelves, or that we ſhould love him in the ſame Degree and Proportion, that we love ourſelves, but only that we ſhould make the Affection, which we bear to ourſelves, the Rule we are to follow, in expreſſing our Love to him; or (in other Words) that we ſhould love him in all the Inſtances wherein we expreſs our Love to ourſelves, though not in an equal Meaſure.

THE Words in the Text are, *On theſe two Commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets*, Matth. xxii. 40. which are a Metaphor, taken from the Cuſtom mentioned by *Tertullian* of hanging up their Laws in a publick Place, to be ſeen of all Men; and import, that in them is contained all that the Law and Prophets do require, in reference to our Duty to God and Man. For, though there be ſome Precepts of Temperance, which we owe to ourſelves, yet are they ſuch, as we may be moved to perform from the true Love of God, and of our Neighbour. For the Love of God will preſerve us from all Impatience, Diſcontent, and evil Luſtings. It will make us watchful over ourſelves to keep a good Conſcience, as being ſollicitous for our eternal Welfare: And the Love of our Neighbour will reſtrain

us from all angry Paſſions, ſuch as Envy, Malice, and other Perturbations, which ariſe againſt him; ſo that theſe two Commandments may be very juſtly called an *Abridgment*, or *Compendium* of the whole Scripture.

BUT to return to the Hiſtory from whence our Explanations have made us digreſs.

ON the next Morning, as our Lord was returning to *Jeruſalem* the third Time, the Apoſtles, obſerving that the Fig-tree, which he had curſed the Day before, was withered away, and dead to the very Root, took notice of it to him, as a Thing very ſtrange and ſurprizing; whereupon he exhorteth them to have ſtedfaſt Faith in God, Fervency and Preſeverance in their Prayers, and a forgiving Temper to thoſe that had offended them, in order to make their Prayers accepted, and then they ſhould not fail, in the Courſe of their Miniſtry, to perform as great, or greater Miracles than this.

WHEN our Lord was come into the Temple, he began to teach the People, as he had done the Day before; and, to raiſe an Averſion in his Diſciples, and in all that heard him, to the Principles and Practices of the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, he took the Freedom to expoſe their Vices without Reſerve; their Pride, their Hypcriſy, the Covetuouſneſs, their Hardheartedneſs to Parents, Impiety to God, and Cruelty to his faithful Servants; and upon his mentioning this laſt Particular, he brake out into the ſame pathetick Exclamation againſt *Jeruſalem*, for her murdering the Prophets, and other Meſſengers ſent from God that had been the Matter of his frequent Lamentations before.

BEFORE he left the Temple, he took Notice, how the People threw their Money into the Treaſury; and among many, who offered very plentifully, obſerving a poor Woman caſt in her two Mites (which amount to no more than a Farthing) he called his Apoſtles, and aſſured them, that that poor Woman had

had been more liberal than any of the reſt, becauſe their Oblations proceeded from their Superfluity, but ſhe from her Indigence had given all ſhe had.

IN the Afternoon, as they were returning to *Bethany*, his Apoſtles took a View of the ſeveral Buildings of the Temple, and were making their Remarks on the Largneſs of its Sones, the Richneſs of its Ornaments, and the Beauty and Statelineſs of the whole; when our Saviour acquainted them, that, how glorious ſoever it might appear at preſent, it would not be long before the whole Structure ſhould be ſo intirely ruined, that there ſhould *not ſo much as one Stone be left upon another*.

THE general Notion was, that this Temple was to laſt even unto the End of the World. And therefore when our Saviour had ſeated himſelf upon Mount *Olivet*, in full View and Proſpect of it, his Apoſtles deſired to know, when this Deſtruction would happen, and what would be the previous Signs of it. The Signs of it, he told them, would be the Coming of many Impoſtors, and falſe *Chriſts*, the Rumours of Wars, and Famines, and Peſtilences, dreadful Earthquakes, Prodigies and amazing Sights in the Air, the Perſecution of *Chriſtians*, and the Propagation of the Goſpel all the World over: But that they might eſcape the Calamity, which would ſuddenly come upon their Country, and utterly deſtroy the *Jewiſh* State and Government, he adverti[ſ]ed them, that, whenever they ſhould ſee the City of *Jeruſalem* inveſted with Armies, and the Temple polluted with Abominations, they might then conclude, that this Diſſolution was approaching, and that therefore it was high Time for them to provide for their Safety by a quick Retreat.

OF the preciſe Time of its Coming, however, no created Being (as he told them) could certainly know; and therefore it was incumbent upon them to keep themſelves in a State of perpetual Watchfulneſs, in a faithful Diſcharge of their reſpective Duties, in a

conſtant Perſeverance in Prayer to God; all which he endeavoured to inforce with ſeveral Parables, ſuch as that of the *faithful Servant*, whom his Maſter, at his Return from a Journey, found employed in his proper Buſineſs, when he of a contrary Character was ſurprized in his Riot and Debaucheries, and accordingly puniſhed; that of the *wiſe and fooliſh Virgins*, who were differently prepared at the Coming of the Bridegroom; and that of the Talents, intruſted with *diligent* and *ſlothful* Servants. And, as this Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem* was no ſmall Emblem of the final Conſummation of all Things, from hence he proceeds to deſcribe the Manner of his Coming to the laſt and general Judgment, when, ſurrounded with the refulgent Rays of his Majeſty, and ſeated upon his bright Throne of Glory, with all the holy Angels of Heaven attending him, he ſhall ſummons all the People, that ever lived in the World, to appear before him; and having made Inquiſition into the Diſcharge of the great Duty of Charity, ſhall puniſh or reward Mankind, according as he finds that they have acquitted themſelves in this Reſpect.

THE following Obſervations will explain the Difficulties in the foregoing Paſſages.

'TIS remarked of our bleſſed Saviour's Miracles, that they were all Works of Mercy and Beneficence; and that, if any of them had a contrary Tendency, they were always ſhewn upon brute and inanimate Creatures, and that too, not without a charitable Intent of conveying ſome ſymbolical Inſtruction to the Spectators, as this Withering of the Fig-tree was to repreſent to the *Jewiſh* Nation their approaching Doom.

THE Command to forgive thoſe that have offended us, before we pray, not only ſhews, that no Reſentment of what our Brother hath done ſhould ſtick long upon our Spirit, becauſe they indiſpoſe us for that Duty which we ought to be continually prepared for, but that there is likewiſe ſome kind of Forgive-

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neſs to be exerciſed, even towards him that does not aſk it, nor ſhew any Tokens of his Repentance, *viz.* that we ſhould not only free our Minds from all Deſires of Revenge, and ſo far forget the Injury, as not to upbraid him with it, but be inclined likewiſe to ſhew him Kindneſs, and ready to do him any good Turn: For what the Law required of a *Jew* to do to his Enemy's Beaſt, *Exod.* xxiii. 4, 5 that, without all Controverſy, the Goſpel requires of a *Chriſtian* to do to his offending Brother.

IT was a common Saying among the *Jews*, when they were minded to commend any of their Doctors for his great Dexterity in ſolving difficult Queſtions, that *ſuch an one was a Rooter up of Mountains*; and, in Alluſion to this *Adage*, our Saviour tells his Diſciples, that *if they had Faith, they might ſay to a Mountain, Be thou removed, and be thou caſt into the Sea, and it ſhould be done*, Matth. xxi. 21. *i. e.* that, in Confirmation of the *Chriſtian* Faith they ſhould be able to do the moſt difficult Things. For, beſides that our Saviour's Words are not to be taken in a literal Senſe, they are likewiſe to be reſtrained to the *Age of Miracles*, and to the Perſons to whom they were ſpoken, *viz.* the Apoſtles, and firſt Propagators of the *Chriſtian* Religion, becauſe Experience teaches us, that this is no ordinary and ſtanding Gift belonging to the Church.

THE firſt Inſtitution of the *Jewiſh* Treaſury, we find in 2 *Kings* xii. 9. where it is ſaid, that *Jehoiada the Prieſt took a Cheſt, and bored an Hole in the Lid of it, and ſet it before the Altar, on the Right-ſide, as one goeth into the Houſe of the Lord, and the Prieſts, that kept the Door, put therein all the Money, that was brought into the Houſe.* This Money was, at that Time, given for the Reparation of the Temple, and in after Ages, the Money caſt into the Treaſury, even in our Saviour's Time, was deſigned, not only for the Relief of the Poor, but for ſacred Uſes, and the adorning of the Temple; which

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might occaſion *Joſephus* to ſay, That the Temple was built not only with the Bounty of *Herod*, but with the Money contained in the holy Treaſury likewiſe, and with the Tributes, which were ſent from all Parts of the World.

JOSEPHUS, who gives us a Deſcription of the Temple built by *Herod*, tells us, among other Things, that *the whole Fabrick was made of durable white Stone, ſome of which were five and twenty Cubits long, eight in Height, and twelve in Breadth.*

THE Ornaments of the Temple were the Spoils, which their Kings had taken in War; the rich Preſents, which foreign Princes, upon certain Occaſions, had made; and the coſtly Gifts, which the *Jews*, from all Parts of the World, uſed to ſend to the Temple at *Jeruſalem*. Theſe were hung againſt the Walls, and the Pillars of the Temple, for the People to behold; and, when *Herod* had rebuilt it, he not only re-placed all the former Ornaments, but added ſeveral others, eſpecially the Spoils which he took in his War with the *Arabians*, and a Vine of maſſy Gold, of prodigious Weight and Value, which was his own free Gift.

THE Prophecy of our Bleſſed Saviour, of the entire Ruin of the Temple, was, in great meaſure, accompliſhed about forty Years after; when (as ſeveral *Jewiſh* Authors tell us, *Taurus*, i. e. *Tirentius Rufus*, whom *Titus* left chief Commander of the Army in *Judea*, did with a Plow-ſhare tear up the Foundation of the Temple, and thereby ſignally fulfilled the Words of the Prophet, *Therefore ſhall* Zion *for your ſakes be plowed as a Field, and* Jeruſalem *ſhall become Heaps, and the Mountain of the Lord as high Places of the Foreſts*, *Micah* iii. 12. It can hardly be thought however, but that notwithſtanding this Demoliſhment, there might probably be *left one Stone upon another*, and therefore ſomething more was wanting towards the literal Completion of our Saviour's Prophecy, to which the Emperor *Julian*, in ſome Meaſure, contributed

tributed: For, having given the *Jews* Licence to re-build their Temple at *Jeruſalem*, they took away every Stone of the old Foundation to help to build their new Edifice; but Heaven prevented their Deſign: For Flaſhes of Lightning (as our beſt Hiſtorians tell us) burſt out from the Foundation they had dug, and ſo blaſted and terrified them, that they were forced to give over their Enterprize, after they had pulled up, and removed all the Remains of the old Temple.

NEVER were there ſo many Impoſtors, or falſe *Chriſts*, as in the Time a little before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, (*Joſeph. Antiq.* l. xx. c. 6.) doubtleſs, becauſe this was the Age, wherein the *Jews*, from the Prophecy of *Daniel*, were taught to expect their *Meſſiah*.

BESIDES the War which the *Jews* waged with the *Syrians*, not long before the Deſtruction of their City (*Joſ. Antiq.* l. ii. c. 19.) the Conteſts between *Otho* and *Vitellius* and *Veſpaſian* at *Rome* were much about the ſame Time, and the Oppreſſion of the Governors of *Judea*, who minded nothing but to inrich themſelves, had ſo irritated the Minds of the People, that, for ſome Time before their final Calamity, we read of nothing but Rebellions and Revolts, Parties and Factions, and Bands of Robbers harraſſing and infeſting the Country.

IN the fouth Year of *Claudius* (as *Euſebius* informs us) there happened a great Famine, which oppreſſed all the *Roman* Empire, but more eſpecially *Paleſtine*, where many periſhed (according to *Joſephus*) for lack of Food. And the ſame Hiſtorian informs us, that, when one *Niger* was ſlain by the *Jews*, he imprecated Famine and Peſtilence upon their Cities, which God accordingly inflicted.

IN the Reigns of *Claudius* and *Nero*, there happened many Earthquakes in *Aſia Minor* and the Iſles of the *Archipelago*, where the *Jews* inhabited; (*Euſeb. Chron.* and *Tacit. Annal.* l. 2.) And *Joſephus*

phus acquaints us that in the Night, when the *Idumæans* encamped before *Jeruſalem*, *there blew a dreadful Tempeſt of Wind and Rain, accompanied with ſuch terrible Flaſhes of Lightning, Claps of Thunder, and bellowing of Earth quakes, that put all People to their Wits End to think, what theſe Prodigies might portend.*

IN his Preface to the Hiſtory of the Wars of the *Jews*, *Joſephus* undertakes to record the Miſeries and Calamities, which befel that Nation, and the Signs and Prodigies, which preceeded their Ruin. To this Purpoſe he tells us, that, for a whole Year together, a *Comet*, in the Figure of a Sword, hung over the City, and pointed as it were directly down upon it; and there were ſeen, in the Clouds, Armies in Battle-array, and Chariots, encompaſſing the Country, and inveſting their Cities; that, at the Feaſt of the Paſſover, in the middle of the Night, a great Light ſhone upon the Temple and Altar, as if it had been Noon-day: that, at the ſame Feaſt the great Gate of the Temple, made all of maſſy Braſs, and which twenty Men could hardly ſhut, opened of itſelf, tho' faſtened with Bolts and Bars; that, at the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*, ſoon after, when the Prieſts went into the Temple to officiate, they heard, at firſt a Kind of confuſed Noiſe, and then a Voice calling out earneſtly, in articulate Words, *Let us be gone, let us be gone*; and that theſe Prodigies were really ſo, we have the Teſtimoney of *Tacitus*, a *Roman* Hiſtorian of that Age.

THAT Part of our Saviour's Prediction concerning the Perſecution of *Chriſtians*, was literally fulfilled before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*. Aſſoon as *Chriſtianity* began to ſpread, the *Jews* wrote Letters to every Part of the World againſt the Profeſſors of it, in order to raiſe Perſecutions againſt them. St. *Paul*, before his Converſion, *breathing out Threatnings, and Slaughter againſt the Diſciples of Chriſt*, Acts ix. 1. *ſhut up many of them in Priſon, both Men and Women*, Acts xxii. 4. xxvi. 10 to himſelf, when

when he converted, and *Silas*, were not only impriſoned, but beaten in the Synagogue, *Acts* xvi. 23. as were likewiſe *Peter* and *John*, *Acts*. v. 18. *Stephen*, the firſt Martyr, was ſlain by the Council, *Acts* vii. 59. *James the Greater*, by *Herod*, *Acts* xii. 1. and *James the Leſs*, by *Ananus* the High-prieſt: Multitudes of *Chriſtians* were perſecuted to Death by *Saul*, *Acts* xxii. 4. by the *Jews*, as *Juſtin Martyr* teſtifies; and by the Emperor *Nero*, as *Tacitus* relates, *Annal.* l. 15. for the Profeſſors of our moſt holy Religion, before the Principles of it came to be enquired into, were looked upon as the common Enemies of Mankind; inſomuch that whoſoever killed them, thought that he did God Service, *John* xvi. 2.

THAT before the Diſſolution of the *Jewiſh* State the *Chriſtian* Religion had ſpread itſelf over all the Parts of the then known World, we may reaſonably conclude from the Labours of St. *Paul*, who alone carried the Goſpel through *Judea*, *Syria*, *Arabia*, *Greece*, *Macedonia*, *Achaia*, *Aſia Minor* and *Italy*, &c. And if the other Apoſtles, whoſe Travels we are not ſo well acquainted with did the like, there is no doubt to be made, but that *their Sound went into all the Earth, and their Words unto the Ends of the World*, Rom. x. 18. St. *Peter* addreſſes his firſt Epiſtle to the Elect, that were in *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Aſia*, and *Bithynia*; and *Clemens*, who was his Contemporary, and immediate Succeſſor to the See of *Rome*, in his Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, tells us, *that the Nations beyond the Ocean were governed by the Precepts of the Lord.* An Event this! which he only could foretel, who having all Power in Heaven and Earth, was able to effect it.

IMMEDIATELY after the Tribulation of thoſe Days, ſhall the Sun be darkened, and the Moon ſhall not give her Light, and the Stars ſhall fall from Heaven, and the Powers of the Heavens ſhall be ſhaken, Matth. xxiv. 29. that theſe Words are to be taken in a literal

literal Senſe, 'tis plain, becauſe that after the Sacking of *Jeruſalem* by *Veſpaſian*'s Army no ſuch Thing as is here mentioned happened to the Sun, Moon, or Stars. Theſe Expreſſions therefore muſt be metaphorical, and do here denote, as they frequently do in the Writings of the Prophets, and other Authors, the intire Deſtruction and utter Deſolation, which is brought upon any Nation. For in this Language the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of the Deſtruction of *Babylon*: *The Day of the Lord cometh, cruel, both with Wrath and fierce Anger to lay the Land deſolate, and he ſhall deſtroy the Sinners thereof out of it: For the Stars of Heaven, and the Conſtellations thereof ſhall not give their Light; the Sun ſhall be darkened in his going forth, and the Moon ſhall not cauſe her Light to ſhine*, chap. xiii. 9. which, according to *Maimonides*, are *proverbial Expreſſions, importing the Deſtruction, and utter Ruin of a Nation, and of ſuch Perſons more eſpecially, who, for their State and Dignity, might be compared to the Sun, Moon, and Stars.* Accordingly, the Senſe of our Saviour's Words muſt be,——That, after the taking and deſtroying of *Jeruſalem*, God's Judgments would ſtill purſue the People, ſo that thoſe who ſurvived the Ruin of their Country, ſhould be diſperſed into different Regions, ſold for Slaves, or reduced to a Condition worſe than Slavery. And ſo the Event proved: For thoſe that were carried to *Rome*, ſerved only to adorn the Triumph of their Conqueror: Thoſe that fled to *Antioch* for Shelter, were cruelly maſſacred there: Thoſe, that maintained the Caſtle of *Maſſada*, rather than fall into the Hands of the Enemy, agreed to ſlay one another: Thoſe that eſcaped to *Thebes* and *Alexandria*, were brought back, and tortured to Death; and thoſe of *Cyrene*, who joined a falſe Prophet, named *Jonathan*, were all cut to Pieces by the *Roman* General. All this happened immediately after the taking of *Jeruſalem*; and without any farther Search into their Hiſtory, is enough to verify our

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Saviour's Expreſſion, that *the Sun was darkened, and the Moon gave no Light* upon that wretched People.

THE Deſolation which the *Jews* ſuffered in this laſt War with the *Romans*, was ſo vaſtly great that all Hiſtory can ſcarce furniſh us with an Example of the like Nature. The Number of the Slain was Eleven hundred thouſand; the Number of their Priſoners was Ninety-ſeven thouſand. Thoſe that were above ſeventeen, were ſent into *Egypt* to work in the Mines; thoſe that were under that Age, were ſold for Slaves into different Countries; and a great Number of others were diſtributed in the *Roman* Provinces, to be expoſed to wild Beaſts on the *Theatre*; and, as Gladiators, to kill one another, for the Sport and Diverſion of the Spectators: *Until the Cities were waſted without Inhabitant, and the Houſes without a Man, and the Land was utterly deſolate, and the Lord had removed Men far away, and there was a great Forſaking in the midſt of the Land*, as the Prophet expreſſes it, *Iſai.* vi. 11, 12.

THE *Chriſtians* took the Advice of our Saviour: For when *Ceſtius Gallus* had beſieged *Jeruſalem*, and, without any viſible Cauſe, on a Sudden, raiſed the Siege, the *Chriſtians* that were in the City took this Opportunity to make their Eſcape to *Pella* in *Paræa*, a mountainous Country, and to other Places under the Government of King *Agrippa*, where they found Safety. Thus punctually, were the Predictions of our Saviour fulfilled; ſo that *whoſoever ſhall compare them* (as *Euſebius*, in his *Eccl. Hiſt.* l. iii. c. 7. expreſſes it) *with the Account of* Joſephus, *concerning the War of the* Jews, *cannot but admire the Wiſdom of* Chriſt, *and own his Predictions to be divine.*

THE Puniſhment inflicted on the evil Servant is ſaid to be *cutting aſunder*, Matth. xxiv. 51. In the ſame Manner as *Samuel* uſed *Agag*, 1 Sam. xv. 33. and *David* the *Ammonites*, 2 Sam. xii. 31. and *Nabuchodonoſor* threatned the Blaſphemers of the true God,

Dan. iii. 29. This Puniſhment was, in old Times, inflicted on thoſe that were falſe to their Creditors, Rebels to their Prince, or Betrayers of their Country; nor was it in Uſe only among the *Eaſtern* People, but among the *Romans*, as we learn from *Suetonius* in the Life of *Caius*, and among the *Greeks*, as *Homer*, *Sophocles*, and *Ariſtophanes* informs us: And therefore this Puniſhment, ſays our Saviour, will I inflict on thoſe, that are perfidious to their Covenant in Baptiſm, and Enemies, to my Government.

THE better to underſtand the Parable of the *wiſe and fooliſh Virgins*, we ſhould do well to obſerve what the Cuſtom at Marriages was, to which our Saviour ſeems to allude. When the Bridegroom was to bring home the Bride (which was generally the concluſive Ceremony, and done in the Night-time) the young Women of the Town, to which ſhe was to come, in order to do her Honour, went to meet her with lighted Lamps: She too, according to her Quality and Condition, had her Companions and Servants attending her, and ſome of the moſt beautiful Ladies of the Place, from whence ſhe came, going before her. And moſt of our modern Travellers inform us, that among the *Eaſtern* People (eſpecially the *Perſians*) this Way of conducting the Brides home, with Lamps and with lighted Torches, ſtill prevails. None need be told, that by the Bride-groom we are to underſtand our Saviour *Chriſt*; by the Bride, his Church; by the Virgins, Chriſtians in general; and by the *Oil in their Lamps*, the neceſſary Qualifications of Faith and good Works.

FOR an Explication of the Parable of the Talents entruſted with diligent and ſlothful Servants we may obſerve, that the Man *travelling into a far Country*, is our Saviour *Chriſt*, who, by aſcending into Heaven, has deprived the Church of his corporal Preſence; that his Servants, are *Chriſtians* in general, or, more particularly, Apoſtles, and firſt Miniſters,

ſters, who ſucceeded him in the Propagation of the Goſpel; and the Talents committed to their Management, are the ſupernatural Gifts which he beſtowed upon them, and all the Endowments both of Body and Mind, all the Helps and Means, and Opportunities which he gives us, in order to ſerve him, and to work out our Salvation.

THE Reaſon of our Lord's mingling the Signs of the particular Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, and of the general Diſſolution of the World together, was, to engage us, at the Approach of particular Judgments upon Cities and Nations, to be always mindful and prepared for the general Judgment of the laſt Day.

THAT the Throne of Glory, upon which *Chriſt* ſhall ſit at the laſt Day, will be nothing elſe but a bright and refulgent Cloud, we have Reaſon to believe, from the Teſtimony of the Angels that attended at our Lord's Aſcenſion. For while the Apoſtles, then preſent, were *looking ſtedfaſtly towards Heaven, as he went up, behold two Men ſtood by them in white Apparel, who alſo ſaid, Ye Men of* Galilee, *why ſtand ye gazing up to Heaven? This ſame* Jeſus, *which is taken up from you into Heaven, ſhall ſo come in like Manner as ye have ſeen him go into Heaven*, Acts i. 9, 10. which compared with our Lord's own Declarations concerning his ſecond Coming, *Mark* xiii. 26. with what St. *Paul* foretels, 1 *Theſ.* iv. 17. and St. *John* foreſaw, *Revel.* xiv. 14. are abundantly ſufficient to juſtify the generally received Opinion, that, as our bleſſed Saviour went up into Heaven, ſo he ſhall return thence to Judgment, upon a true and material Cloud.

THE Manner in which our Saviour expreſſes himſelf, upon this Occaſion, ſeems to imply, that the general Judgment is to be held in ſome particular Place; and from a Paſſage in the Prophet *Joel*, ſeveral modern, as well as ancient Doctors, are of Opinion, that the Valley of *Jehoſhaphat* is appointed to be the Place: *For I will gather all Nations,*

ſays God, *and will bring them down into the Valley of* Jehoſhaphat, *and I will plead with them there for my People, and for my Heritage* Iſrael, Chap. iii. 2. but as the Word *Jehoſhaphat*, in that Text, ſignifies the *Judgment of God*, the Valley of *Jehoſhaphat* denotes any Place, in general, where God exerciſes his Judgments. The Truth is, if all Nations of the World muſt appear before the *Judgment-Seat of Chriſt*; and, that they may receive the Things done in the Body, are to be cloathed with their Reſurrection Bodies, there muſt neceſſarily be required a large Space to contain them; and therefore St. *Paul* ſeems to point out the grand Expanſum of the Air, as the moſt convent for that Purpoſe.

RETURN we now to our Hiſtory. As ſoon as our Lord had finiſhed this prophetick Diſcourſe, he went, in the Evening to *Bethany*, and there ſupped at the Houſe of one *Simon*, whom he had formerly cured of a Leproſy. At Supper, *Mary*, to teſtify her Love and Reſpect, came, and, out of an Alabaſter Cruſe, poured a large Quantity of ſuch rich Ointment upon his Head, as filled the whole Houſe with its fragrant Smell. This ſeeming Prodigality raiſed the Indignation of the Reſt of the Apoſtles, as well as *Judas*; and as they made the ſame Objection, ſo our Saviour's Defence of *Mary* turns upon the ſame Topicks; only he adds, *that, as ſhe had done a great and generous Action, whereſoever his Goſpel ſhould be preached through the whole World, there ſhould her munificent Regard to him be likewiſe publiſhed, to her everlaſting Honour and Renown.*

WHEN Supper was ended, our Lord repaired to his uſual Lodgings, at *Martha*'s Houſe; and on the Day following, (in all Probability) continued at *Bethany*, without going to *Jeruſalem*, as he had done the Day before. In the mean Time the *Sanhedrim* aſſembled at the Palace of *Caiaphas*, the High-prieſt, where the Prieſts, Scribes and Elders of the People, had a ſolemn Debate and Conſultation, how they might

might take *Jeſus* by ſome ſecret Stratagem, and put him to death. This was the ſecond Council, that they had held upon this Occaſion; and though therein it was determined that he ſhould die, yet they thought it not ſo adviſable to put the Thing in Execution, in the Time of this Solemnity, leſt it ſhould cauſe a Sedition among the People, who had the higheſt Veneration for him.

WHEN Evening was come, he with his Apoſtles, ſupped (very probably) at *Martha*'s Houſe; and while they were at Table, conſidering with himſelf that his Time was now ſhort, he was minded to give them a Teſtimony of his Love; and from his own Example, teach them two Virtues, which, of all others, were more eſpecially requiſite in their Miniſtry of the Goſpel, Humility and Charity. To this Purpoſe, riſing from the Table, laying aſide his upper Garment, and girding himſelf with a Towel (as the Manner of Servants then was, when they waited on their Maſters) he poured Water into a Baſon, and began to waſh his Apoſtles Feet, and wipe them with a Towel. Amazed at the Condeſcenſion, St. *Peter* (when he came to him) refuſed at firſt, to admit of ſuch a ſervile Office from his heavenly Maſter; but when he urged the Neceſſity, and, in ſome Meaſure, intimated to him the ſymbolical Intent of it, he permitted him to do juſt what he thought fit.

WHEN our Lord had made an End of waſhing his Apoſtles Feet, he put on his Garment, and ſat down at Table again, and began to tell them the Meaning of what he had done, *viz. That ſince he who was ſo juſtly acknowledged to be their Lord and Maſter, had ſo far debaſed himſelf, as to waſh their Feet; they, in Imitation of his Example, ought to think it no Diſparagement to them, to perform the meaneſt Offices of Kindneſs and Charity to one another: For tho' they were exalted to the Dignity of his Apoſtles, yet ſtill they were but his Servants, and therefore it would be*

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an high Piece of Arrogance in them, to aſſume more State ani Grandeur, than their Maſter had done before them.

SOON after this, reflecting with himſelf, how well he had loved, and upon all Occaſions, how kindly he had treated theſe his Diſciples, he was not a little concerned, that any of them ſhould prove ſo baſe and ungrateful to betray him; and when he had declared the Thing, and *Peter*, deſirous to know the Perſon, beckoned to *John*, who was neareſt his Maſter, to aſk him the Queſtion; he ſignified to him, that it was *Judas Iſcariot*, to whom he gave a Sop (as he told *John* he would) and when he had ſo done, *bad him go about what he was about with all Expedition*; which the reſt of the Apoſtles, being ignorant of the Signal which our Lord had given *John*, ſuppoſed to be an Order to *Judas* (as he was the Purſe-bearer) either to give ſomething to the Poor, or to provide what was neceſſary for the Feaſt.

AS ſoon as Supper was ended, *Judas* being now confirmed in his wicked Reſolution, left *Bethany* in haſte; and underſtanding that the *Sanhedrim* was met at the High-Prieſt's Houſe, thither he repaired; and, upon giving him a ſufficient Reward, offered to betray his Maſter, and (in the Manner they deſired) to deliver him privately into their Hand. This Propoſition was highly pleaſing to the Council; who immediately bargained with him for thirty Pieces of Silver: And when *Judas* had received the Money, from that Moment he ſought an Opportunity to betray his Maſter, in the Abſence of the Multitude.

WHILE *Judas* was thus bartering for his Maſter's Blood, his Maſter was preparing the Reſt of his Diſciples for his Departure, and endeavouring to comfort them with this Conſideration, that his Death would be a Means to diſplay both his own, and his Father's Glory, as it was a Preliminary to his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion into Heaven. As therefore it was decreed that he muſt leave them, the

ſtronger ſhould their Union be with one another; and therefore he recommended, very earneſtly to them, the Duty of mutual Love; a Duty which had been hitherto ſo much neglected, that his enjoyning it might well be accounted a *new Commandment*, and what was to be the common Badge and Character of his true Diſciples for ever after.

WHEN the Day before the *Feaſt of the Paſſover* was come, our Lord ſent to *Peter* and *John* to *Jeruſalem*, to prepare all Things according to the Law; and leaſt they ſhould want a convenient Room for the Celebration of the *Paſchal* Supper, he had prediſpoſed the Heart of a certain Hoſt in the City, to accommodate them with one. And therefore, having provided a Lamb, ſlain it in the Temple, ſprinkled its Blood on the Altar, and done every Thing elſe that was required of them, they returned to their Maſter at *Bethany*: For he perceiving that his Diſcourſe, about leaving the World and them, had blaſted all their Hopes of ſecular Greatneſs and left them melancholy and diſconſolate, ſtayed a good Part of the Day with them at *Bethany*, to raiſe their drooping Spirits, with the Aſſurances of an happy Immortality; which (as he told them) he was to prepare for them in Heaven, and wanted not Power to do it, becauſe he and his Father (as to their Divinity) were perfectly the ſame; and with the Promiſe of ſending them the Holy Spirit from above, which he took Care to repreſent, as a Comforter, to ſupport them in Afflictions; as a Teacher to inſtruct them in all neceſſary Truths; and as an Advocate to plead and defend their Cauſe againſt their Enemies. So that they had no Reaſon to be dejected, becauſe in this Senſe he would be always with them; becauſe, whatever they aſked in his Name, his Father would give them; and becauſe, when he was gone, they ſhould be enabled to do Miracles, greater than what they had ſeen him do; and therefore, *Peace I leave with you*, ſays he, taking his Farewel, *my Peace I*

give

give unto you: Not as the World giveth, give I unto you; let not your Hearts be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

HERE we may add ſome explanatory Remarks on the foregoing Paſſages.

ACCORDING to the Tradition of the Church, the Conſultation, which the *Sanhedrim* held, and the Agreement which *Judas* made with them to betray our Lord were on *Wedneſday*; and therefore they gave it as a Reaſon, why they faſted on *Wedenſdays* and *Fridays*, becauſe on the one *Chriſt* was betrayed, and ſuffered on the other.

Caiaphas, the High-prieſt, is called, by the *Jewiſh* Hiſtorian, *Joſeph*. The High-prieſthood he purchaſed of *Valerius Gracchus*; and after, he had ten Years enjoyed that Dignity, was depoſed by *Vitellius*, Governor of *Syria*, and ſucceeded by *Jonathan*, the Son of *Ananus* or *Annas*.

THE Pieces of Silver which *Judas* received to betray his Maſter were *Staters*, or *Shekels of the Sanctuary*; Thirty of which amounted to three Pounds and fifteen Shillings of our Money; the uſual Price that was given for a Man or Maid Servant, *Exod.* xxi. 32. 'Tis hardly ſuppoſeable that any of theſe Pieces are at this Time extant, though both at *Rome* and *Paris* there are Pieces ſhewn, which are pretended to be the very ſame that were Part of the Price of the Purchaſe of our Saviour's Blood; but Perſons well ſkilled in that Art, aſſure us, that theſe Pieces are only the antient Medals of *Rhodes*; on the one Side ſtamped with a *Coloſs*, which repreſents the Sun, and on the other a Roſe, which was the City Arms, as we call it.

THE Diſciples of the *Baptiſt* were known by the Auſterity of their Lives, and the Diſciples of the *Phariſees* by their Habit and Separation from other Men, but our bleſſed Saviour was willing to have his Diſciples known by their mutual Love and Affection to each other; which in the primitive Ages, was

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ſo great, that theſe great *Heathens*, with Admiration cry out, *See how they love one another!* and even hate and envy them for their mutual Affection.

WITH reſpect to the Feaſt of the Paſſover, to which our Saviour was about to repair, St. *Matthew* ſays, Chap. xxvi. 17. *It was the firſt Day of the Feaſt*; but it is no uncommon Thing to put the Word *firſt* for that which properly *went before*. Thus in the *Old Teſtament* it is ſaid, *that the Hands of the Witneſſes ſhall be* firſt *upon him*, that if condemned to die, *to put him to Death, and afterwards the Hands of all the People*, Deut. xvii. 7. but if the Hands of the Witneſſes ſhould firſt diſpatch him, there would be no Occaſion for the Hands of the People. In the firſt Book of *Macchabees*, it is twice ſaid of *Alexander the Great*, that he reigned *firſt* over *Greece*, Chap. i. 1. and vi. 2. but every one knows, that before him there were ſeveral Kings in *Macedonia*; and therefore the Meaning of the Words muſt be, that he reigned in *Macedonia*, *before* he reigned in *Aſia*: And, to the ſame Purpoſe, in the *New Teſtament*, we find St. *Paul* ſtiling our bleſſed Lord *the firſt-born of every Creature*, Coloſſ. i. 15. *i. e.* begotten of the Father *before* the Production of any Creature; and telling us, that *the Huſbandman that laboureth muſt* firſt *partake of the Fruits*, i. e. he muſt labour *before* he can reap the Fruits of his Travel; and, in like Acceptation of the Word, the *firſt* Day of the Feaſt, may be interpreted the Day *before* the Feaſt, as might be proved likewiſe by *Heathen* Authors.

IT is to be obſerved, that the Houſes in *Jeruſalem*, at the Time of this Feaſt, were of common Right to any that would eat the Paſſover in them; and yet it is not unlikely, that our Lord might be well known to the Maſter of the Houſe; who, very probably, took it as an high Honour, that he had made Choice of his, rather than any other, to eat the *Paſchal* Supper in.

THE *Greek* Word in this Place tranſlated *Com-*

forter, whom our Lord promiſed to ſend them after his Departure, ſignifies both an Advocate and Comforter; and the *Holy Spirit*, when he deſcended upon the Apoſtles did the Part of an Advocate, by confirming their Teſtimony by Signs and Miracles, and various Gifts imparted to them, and by pleading their Cauſe before Kings and Rulers, and againſt all their Adverſaries; and he did the Part of Comforter likewiſe, as he was ſent for the Conſolation of the Apoſtles, and all ſucceeding *Chriſtians*, in all their Troubles, filling their Hearts with Joy and Gladneſs, and giving them an inward Teſtimony of God's Love to them, together with an Aſſurance of their future Happineſs.

WHAT Interpreters ſay of Diſeaſes healed by the *Shadow* of *Peter*, and by a *Napkin* ſent from St. *Paul*, and of Miracles performed throughout the World, and, for the Space of three whole Centuries, Devils ejected every-where, is not unfitly mentioned here, as anſwering to our Saviour's Words; and yet, we cannot but think, that this ſhould chiefly be referred to the wonderful Succeſs of the *Goſpel* preached by the Apoſtles, after the Deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon them; to the Gift of Tongues, and the Interpretation of them; of Prophecy, and diſcerning of Spirits; and the imparting theſe Gifts to others, by Baptiſm, and the Impoſition of the Apoſtles Hands. For, as this was a greater Work in our bleſſed Saviour to aſſiſt ſo many with his mighty Power, when abſent at ſo great a Diſtance, as the Earth is from Heaven, than to do Miracles in their Preſence; ſo to communicate theſe Gifts to Men, and to enable them to transfer them to others, is the evident Effect of a ſupernatural and omnipotent Cauſe, and eſpecially, when our Lord ſucceeded ſo little in his three Years Preaching here on Earth, and had ſo few ſincere Diſciples, that he ſhould enable his Apoſtles, at one Sermon, to convert ſome Thouſands, and cauſe his Goſpel to fly like Lightning

ning through the World, and beat down all the ſtrong Holds of Oppoſition; this is truly wonderful.

PROCEED we now in our Narrative.

As ſoon as he had ended this Diſcourſe, he aroſe, and with his Diſciples, going towards *Jeruſalem*, arrived at the Place were they were to eat the *Paſchal Lamb*. In the Evening, when it grew dark, they ſat down to the Table in a leaning Poſture; and as he began to renew the Diſcourſe, *that one in the Company ſhould certainly betray him, but that better it had been for the Man, who did ſo, if he had never been born*, the Concern and Sadneſs was ſo general, that every one began to enquire for himſelf, whether he was the Man? Until it came to *Judas*'s Turn, who, having the Confidence to aſk the Queſtion, received a poſitive Anſwer, *That he was:* Whereupon he ſoon withdrew from his Maſter and adjoined himſelf to his Enemies, who were impatiently expecting the Performance of his Promiſe.

WHEN the *Paſchal Supper* was ended, our Saviour proceeded to the Inſtitution of another, in Commemoration of his own Death and Paſſion. For he took Bread, and when he had bleſſed it, and broke it, he diſtributed it to his Apoſtles, calling it his Body; and, after he had ſo done, he took the Cup of Wine, and having, in like Manner bleſſed it, he gave it among them, calling it his *Blood of the new Covenant*, and commanding them *to do the ſame*, i. e. to eat Bread and drink Wine in this ſacramental Manner, even unto the End of the World, *in Remembrance of him.*

After this Inſtitution of that Form of the Memorial, which his Apoſtles, and their Poſterity were to continue, he gave them to underſtand, that this was the laſt *Paſchal Supper*, which he ſhould eat, and the laſt Wine that he ſhould drink with them, until *he drank it new in the Kingdom of God:* From which Words ſome of his Apoſtles inferring, that tho' his

Kingdom was not to be then, yet it would not fail to commence immediately after his Reſurrection, they fell into unreaſonable Contentions about Priority, or who ſhould have the Office of the higheſt Truſt and Honour about their Maſter, which our Lord endeavoured to repreſs, by the ſame Arguments that he had employ'd upon the like Occaſion: And then turning to *Peter*, he apprized him of the imminent Danger, which he and his Brethren were in, and what a ſevere Trial the great Enemy of Mankind would very ſpeedily bring upon them, to whom *Peter*, in Confidence of his own Courage and Reſolution, anſwered for himſelf, that *he was ready to go with him to Priſon, and to Death*; but our Saviour, who beſt knew his Weakneſs, gave him to underſtand, that *before the Crowing of the Cock he ſhould deny him thrice.*

AFTER this, our Lord, in his final Exhortation to his Apoſtles, reminded them of the Choice which he had made of them, and the kind Treatment, which he had all along ſhewn them; and that therefore it was their Duty, and their Intereſt both, to adhere to him, *as the Branch did to the Vine*, in order to bring forth the *Fruits of Righteouſneſs*, and to continue immoveable in the Profeſſion of his Religion, notwithſtanding all the Perſecutions they ſhould meet with, which, indeed, would prove ſo violent and outragious, that Men would think they did God Service in killing them. This, however, ſhould not utterly deject them, becauſe his Abſence from them would not be long. His Death was but to uſher in his Reſurrection and Aſcenſion; and the Benefit, which would accrue to them from theſe, *viz.* in the Miſſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, to be their Guide and Comforter, in his own Interceſſion for them at God's Right-Hand, and in their Prayers and Supplications, which (if offered up in his Name, would not fail of Admittance to the Throne of Grace, would abundantly compenſate the Want of his Preſence:

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And *therefore I have told you theſe Things*, ſays he, *that in me ye might have Peace: In the World ye ſhall have Tribulation, but be of good Cheer, I have overcome the World.*

THESE comfortable Exhortations to his Apoſtles, were attended with a ſolemn Prayer and Interceſſion to Almighty God; for himſelf, that as he had executed the Commiſſion, for which he came into the World, he might be reinſtated in the ſame Glory, which he had with his Father from Eternity; for his Apoſtles, that they might live in brotherly Love and Unity, be preſerved in all Dangers, and ſanctified in their Minds and Converſations; and for all ſucceeding Chriſtians, that they might continue in the Communion of the Saints here, and be admitted to the Sight and Participation of his Glory and Felicity hereafter: And, having concluded all with an Hymn, which he and his Apoſtles ſung together, he left the City, and paſſing over the Brook *Cedron*, came to a Place called *Gethſemane*, where there was a Garden well known to *Judas*, becauſe thither our Lord and his Apoſtles uſed frequently to repair, both for Retirement and Devotion.

As they were going to this Place, our Lord, with mighty Concern, began to tell them, that, that very Night the Prophecy of *Zechariah*, concerning *the Shepherd's being ſmitten, and the whole Flock diſperſed*, would be fulfilled in his and their Perſons, foraſmuch as every one of them upon the Diſtreſs that was going to befal him, would flee away from him, and forſake him. This *Peter* thought a Diſparagement to his Courage, and therefore aſſured our Lord, that, *tho' all Mankind ſhould forſake him, yet would not he*; and being told again, that he would certainly deny him before the Time of *Cock-crowing*, with the utmoſt Vehemence he affirmed, that *tho' he ſhould die, he would not deny him*; and the like Profeſſion of undaunted Adherence made all the Reſt.

WHEN

WHEN they were come to the Garden, our Lord ordered the Reſt of his Apoſtles to tarry for him, at a certain Place, whilſt himſelf, with the three that were moſt intimate with him, *Peter*, *James* and *John*, retired a while to his private Devotions; as they were going along, he required them to join their Prayers with his, that they might not be delivered over to Temptation. But they were not gone above the Diſtance of a Stone's Caſt, before he found his Spirits depreſſed, and his Soul *ſadly ſorrowful, even unto Death*; which, when he had diſcovered to the three Apoſtles, and deſired them to watch with him a little, in this trying and momentous Juncture, he withdrew from them; and then throwing himſelf proſtrate on the Ground, begged of God, *That, if it was poſſible* (as all Things were poſſible to him) *he might be excuſed from drinking the bitter Potion, whoſe black Ingredients filled him with Horror and Amazement; nevertheleſs in this he ſubmitted himſelf intirely to his divine Pleaſure:* And, having prayed to this Effect, he returned to his Apoſtles, but finding them aſleep, he awaked them, and, in a Reproof full of Love, reminded *Peter* more eſpecially, of his late Promiſes and preſent Neglect of him, when he moſt of all ſtood in Need of his Comfort and Aſſiſtance. He adviſed him, therefore, to keep himſelf awake, for fear of the Temptations that were buſy about him, and added this compaſſionate Obſervation; that tho' *the Spirit was willing*, and ready enough to make good Reſolutions, yet *the Fleſh was weak*, and unable, very often to put them in Execution.

THRICE did our bleſſed Lord retire and pray in this Manner; but in the laſt Time his Senſe of God's Indignation againſt the Sins of Mankind, and the diſmal Proſpect of what he was to ſuffer in the Expiation of them, made his Prayer more vehement, and his Agonies ſo violent, that the Sweat, which fell from his Body, was like large Drops of Blood; and human Nature muſt have been exhauſted under it

had

had not an Angel from Heaven been immediately ſent to ſtrengthen and ſupport him. With this Recruit he returned the third Time to his Apoſtles; but finding them ſtill in the ſame ſleepy Condition, he told them, that now they might ſleep on as long as they pleaſed, becauſe he had no farther Occaſion for their Aſſiſtance; that however, it would not be improper for them to ariſe, becauſe the Traitor, who was to deliver him up to the *Gentiles*, was juſt at Hand. Nor were the Words well out of his Mouth, before *Judas*, accompanied with a Band of Soldiers and Officers, together with ſome of the chief Prieſts, *Phariſees* and Elders of the People, all armed with Swords and Staves, came to apprehend him.

To prevent all Miſtakes, the Traitor had given them a Sign, that the Perſon whom he ſhould kiſs, was the Man they were to apprehend; and therefore approaching our Lord, with an Addreſs of ſeeming Civility, he ſaluted him, and in Return received a Reproof of his Perfidy, but in ſuch gentle and eaſy Terms, as ſpoke a Mind perfectly calm and undiſturbed; and then ſtepping forward, with an Air of Majeſty, our Lord demanded of the Soldiers, *whom they wanted?* They told him, *Jeſus of Nazareth.* He replied, that he was the Perſon: But when they were going to lay rude Hands upon him, the impetuous Rays of Glory, which darted from his divine Face, ſtruck ſo fiercely upon their Eyes, that they fell to the Ground. However, inſtead of taking the Advantage of their Conſternation, to make his Eſcape (as he had done at other Times) he again demanded of them, *who it was they wanted?* And when they again made him the ſame Anſwer, he told them, That if he was the Perſon, he expected that his Diſciples ſhould depart unmoleſted.

WHEN the Multitude began to lay Hands on *Jeſus*, ſome of his Apoſtles, having Swords with them, aſked their Maſter, if they might draw in his Defence:

Defence: But, before they had his Anſwer, *Peter* had drawn his Sword, and, in great Fury ſtruck at *Malchus*, one of the High-prieſt's Servants, with a Deſign to cleave his Head, though he happened only to cut off his Right-Ear. Our Saviour, however, rebuking his intemperate Zeal, commanded him to put up his Sword, becauſe he had no Occaſion for any human Aid, who had Legions of Angels at his Command; and then, having cured the Man's Ear with a Touch, he turned about, and expoſtulated with the Soldiery, the Indignity of apprehending him in ſo ſcandalous a Manner, as if he were a Thief, or ſome vile Malefactor, when they had daily an Opportunity of taking him in the Temple. But, ſay what he would, it availed nothing. They immediately bound him, and led him away.

THE Apoſtles now, ſeeing their Maſter thus treated, loſt all their Courage, and (as he had foretold them) left him, and took themſelves to Flight. For ſuch was the Violence of the Soldiers, that ſeeing a young Man following the Company, with nothing but a Night-gown on, and ſuppoſing him to be one of our Lord's Diſciples, they laid hold of him; but he, by quitting his Garment, ſlipped out of their Hands, and fled away naked.

BEING come to this Period of our Hiſtory, ſome Remarks thereon may be thought proper.

AT the firſt Inſtitution of the *Paſchal Supper*, the *Iſraelites* were commanded to eat it in a ſtanding Poſture, and in haſte; but here we find our Saviour and his Apoſtles eating it lying down, or inclining on their Left-Side, as it was then the Manner of the *Jews*. When, or upon what Account, this Alteration came to be made, we have no other Information, than what we find in the Writings of their *Rabbins*, *viz.* that they uſed this leaning Poſture, as Freemen do, in Memory of their Freedom; and therefore, though at their ordinary Meals, they commonly ſat at Table, as we do; yet, whenever they were

were minded to regale themſelves, they uſed this Poſture of *Diſcumbency*, and eſpecially at the *Paſchal Supper*, no other was allowed. Thus lying on Beds or Couches, made for that Purpoſe, with a Table before them, whereon they leaned, they ſtretched out their Feet behind them, thereby to remove the leaſt Shew of ſtanding to attend, or to go upon any one's Employment, which might carry in it any Colour of Servitude, or Contrariety to their Freedom. And from this Poſture of ſitting, or leaning upon a Table with their Elbow, one after another, we rightly underſtand thoſe Texts, which ſpeak of the beloved Apoſtle's leaning on the Boſom, or on the Breaſt of *Jeſus*, as the learned *Lightfoot*, in his Diſcourſe of the Temple-Service has amply ſhewn.

IT is a great Queſtion among the Antients, whether *Judas* was preſent at our Lord's Inſtitution of the Sacrament of his Body and Blood, or abſented himſelf before. St. *Luke*'s Words, which are ſubſequent to the Inſtitution, *Behold the Hand of him that betrayed me is with me on the Table*, Chap. xxii. 21. ſeem to imply that he was preſent, and partook of the *Euchariſt*; but many Commentators are of a contrary Opinion, *viz.* that after our Saviour had declared him to be the Man, who would betray him (which was between the *Paſchal* and *Euchariſtical Supper*) he immediately left the Company, and went away; and that conſequently there is a Miſlocation in St. *Luke*'s Words.

The Reaſon which our Saviour gives for our Participation of the Cup, *viz. Becauſe it is the Blood of the New Teſtament, which is ſhed for the Remiſſion of Sins*, concerning the Laity, as well as the Prieſts, becauſe his Blood was equally ſhed for both; and therefore the Command, *Drink ye all of this*, to which the Reaſon is annexed, concerns them likewiſe. But there is another Reaſon, why our Lord ſaid to his Apoſtles, *Eat this Bread, and drink this Cup*, viz. that, by ſo doing, they might remember

his Death, his Body broken, and his Blood equally ſhed for them, ſays St. *Luke*, *and ſhew it forth till his ſecond Coming*, 1 Cor. xi. 26. Now this, as St. *Paul* demonſtrates, concerns all Believers, as well as *Prieſts*, and therefore the *drinking of the Cup* (by which the Commemoration is made) as well as *eating of the Bread*, muſt equally concern them.

SOME are of Opinion, that by the *Kingdom of God* here (as in ſeveral other Places) we are not to underſtand Heaven, or the Happineſs we are there to enjoy, but rather the Goſpel State, and the Kingdom of *Chriſt*, which began at his Reſurrection, and was more fully eſtabliſhed when *he ſat down at the Right-Hand of Power, and was made Heir of all Things*; and conſequently, that our Lord's drinking of Wine, may then relate to this *eating and drinking with his Diſciples, after he aroſe from the Dead*, Acts x. 41. but, becauſe the Felicities of Heaven are frequently repreſented under the Metaphors of eating and drinking, *Matt.* viii. 11. *Luke* ii. 30. others make the Senſe of our Saviour's Words to be this, *I will not henceforth drink of the Fruit of the Vine, but both you and I, and my Father's Glory, ſhall be ſatisfied with Rivers of Pleaſure, far ſweeter, and more excellent than the rich Wines can be.* There is, however, a third Way of interpreting this Paſſage, which, by comparing it with the Words of St *Luke*, ſeems by much the more probable; and that is, by making the Fruits of the Vine ſignify, in a peculiar Manner, the Cup of the Paſſover, or the Cup of Charity in the *Poſtcœnium* of the Paſſover, wherein the Sacraments of *Chriſt*'s Body and Blood was founded. For, that *Chriſt* was now to die, and neither before or after his Reſurrection, to eat any more Paſſovers with his *Apoſtles*, or any more to drink the Cup of Charity, now deſigned to a *Chriſtian* Uſe, is ſufficiently evident. It is obſervable, therefore in St. *Luke*, Chap. xxii. 16, that the Words are directly applied to the *Paſſover*; *I have deſired to eat this Paſſover*,

Paſſover, for I will no more eat of it; and by repeating the *Cup*, Ver. 18. the *Evangeliſt* muſt mean *the Cup of the Paſſover*, or the *ſacramental Cup of Charity*, which ſucceeded it; and conſequently our Saviour's Meaning muſt be, That he would no more uſe theſe typical Adumbrations, being himſelf now ready to perform what was ſignified and expreſſed by them, *i. e.* to paſs ſuddenly from Earth to Heaven, through a Red Sea of Blood, and there to compleat the Myſtery of the Sacrament, by uniting his Diſciples one to another, and making them all Partakers of his heavenly Riches.

IT is commonly remarked by profane Authors, that the Cock uſually crows twice in a Night; once about Midnight, and the ſecond Time at the fourth Watch of the Night, or much about Break of Day; that this latter, as being the louder and more obſervable, is that which is properly called *Cock-crowing*; and that of this Crowing of the Cock the *Evangeliſts* are to be underſtood, when they relate *Chriſt*'s Words thus, *before the Cock crow* (*i. e.* before that Time of Night, which is emphatically ſo called) *thou ſhalt deny me thrice*, appears from St. *Mark*'s Saying, that the Cock crowed after his firſt Denial of *Chriſt*, and crowed the ſecond Time, after his third Denial.

THOUGH to be of good cheer under Tribulation, does by no means infer that Firmneſs of Mind (as ſome Philoſophers of old miſcalled it) which preſerves a Man from being at all afflicted with Calamities, or moved from his uſual Eaſineſs of Temper; yet thus much it certainly means, That neither the Sharpneſs of any Afflictions we feel, nor the Terror of any we fear, ſhould ſo far vanquiſh our Reaſon and Religion, as to drive us upon unlawful Methods of declining the one, or delivering ourſelves from the other. We are to ſatisfy ourſelves in the Juſtice, the Wiſdom and Goodneſs of him, who orders all the Events that befal us; to entertain them with all Meekneſs and much Patience; to bring our Wills

into Subjection to the divine Will; to rejoice in the Teſtimony of a good Conſcience, and preſerve it at any Rate, tho' with the Hazard, nay, certain Loſs of all our worldy Advantages; and to ſet the Supports and Rewards of perſecuted Truth and afflicted Piety, in Oppoſition to all the Diſcouragements and Preſſures from Abroad, and all the Frailties of feeble and too-yielding Fleſh and Blood at Home.

By the World, in this Paſſage, (*I have overcome the World*) we are no doubt, to underſtand the Evil of the World, the Wickedneſs, the Malice, the Temptations, the Troubles, all that we have Reaſon to fear, or flee from, either in this or the next Life. Now the Wickedneſs of the World *Chriſt* has overcome, by expiating the Sins of Mankind in the Sacrifice of himſelf upon the Croſs; and by the powerful Aſſiſtance of his Grace, enabling all the Faithful to conquer the Paſſions of corrupt Nature. The Malice of it he overcame, by diſappointing the Deſigns of the *Devil*, and his wicked Inſtruments againſt himſelf, and his Goſpel, making his own Sufferings fatal to the Contrivers, and ſaving to all penitent Believers. The Temptations of it he overcome, by that ſevere, but ſtill ſocial Virtue, and heavenly Piety, which ſhone ſo bright in all his Converſation; and the Troubles of it by ſubmitting to Hunger and Thirſt, to Poverty and Grief, to live like the worſt of Men. Even Death itſelf, our laſt and moſt dreaded Enemy, he has overcome, taken from *this ſtrong Man the Armour wherein he truſted, and divided his Spoils.*

The Hymn ſung by our Lord and his Diſciples at his laſt Supper, by moſt Interpreters thought to be Part of the great *Allelujah*, which began at the cxiiith and ended at the cxviiith *Pſalm*; and, by the *Jewiſh Ritual*, was ordered to be ſung conſtantly at the *Paſchal-Supper*. Others think that it was a different Hymn, compoſed by *Chriſt*, and accommodated to the particular Inſtitution of the *Euchariſt*; But *Grotius*

tius is of Opinion, that it was no other than that Thankſgiving of his, which St. *John* has recorded in the xviith Chapter of his Goſpel. As our bleſſed Saviour, however, in all his religious Conduct, was no Lover of Innovations it ſeems more probable, that, upon this Occaſion, he made uſe of the *Pſalms* that were then cuſtomary in the *Jewiſh* Church, in which (as the *Jews* obſerve) are mentioned the Sorrows of the *Meſſiah*, and the Reſurrection of the Dead.

THE Brook *Cedron*, in the *Old Teſtament*, is called *Kidron*, and runs along the Bottom of the Valley of *Jehoſhaphat*, which lies to the *Eaſt* between *Jeruſalem* and Mount *Olivet*. Into this Valley was conveyed the Blood, poured out at the Foot of the Altar, which, as it diſcoloured the Water, gave it the Name *Cedron* (as ſome think) from the Word *Kiddar*, which ſignifies *Blackneſs*; tho' others rather imagine that it had that Name from the Cedar-Trees that were planted on each Side of it.

THE Garden of *Gethſemane*, which took its Name from the Wine-Preſſes in it (as Mr. *Maundrel* informs us) is an even Plat of Ground, not fifty ſeven Yards ſquare, lying between the Foot of Mount *Olivet*, and the Brook *Cedron*. It is well planted with Olive-trees, and thoſe of ſo old a Growth, that they are believed to be the ſame that ſtood here in our Saviour's Time; but this is hardly poſſible. At the upper Corner of the Garden is a flat naked Ledge of Rock, ſuppoſed to be the Place, on which the Apoſtle *Peter*, *James* and *John* fell aſleep, during our Lord's Agony: A few Paces from thence is a Grotto, in which he is ſaid to have undergone that bitter Part of his Paſſion; and (what is very remarkable) in the Midſt of the Garden there is a ſmall Slip of Ground, twelve Yards long, and one broad, reputed the very Path, on which the Traytor *Judas* walked up to *Chriſt*, when he ſaid, *Hail Maſter, and kiſſed him*, which the *Turks* themſelves have walled in, as account-

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ing the very Ground accurſed, on which was acted ſuch an infamous Tragedy.

THE Paſſage in *Zachariah*, to which our Saviour alludes, when he tells them what ſhould befal both him and them, that very Night, is this, *Awake, O Sword, againſt my Shepherd, and againſt the Man that is my Fellow, ſaith the Lord of Hoſts. Smite the Shepherd, and the Sheep ſhall be ſcattered, and I will turn my Hand upon the little ones:* Where we may obſerve, that our Saviour only cites the Words in the Middle of the Verſe, becauſe, indeed, thoſe that both preceeded and followed them, were not at all to his Purpoſe: And in this he imitated the antient Doctors of the *Jewiſh* Church, who, in their Allegations of Scripture-Paſſages, were wont to make uſe of no more than what was ſubſervient to their Argument. Some, however, imagine, becauſe the Words in *Zachariah* ſeem primarily to relate to an evil Shepherd, to whom God threatens the Sword, that *Chriſt* does not mention them as a Prediction concerning him and his Apoſtles, but only as a proverbial Expreſſion: But this, I think, is ſufficiently confuted, by our Lord's ſaying, *for it is written.* Nor is the Change of the Perſon in the *Evangeliſt*, from what occurs in the Prophet, of any Moment, becauſe it was cuſtomary with the *Jewiſh* Doctors, in their Citations of Scripture, to make ſuch Alterations.

WE may be bold to affirm of St. *Peter*'s Reſolution, that it was an honeſt one, *i. e.* both as juſt in the Matter, and as ſincere in the Intention, as ever was made by Man, or ever ſhall be made to the End of the World; and yet this Reſolution miſcarried, and ended only in the Shame of the Reſolver. St. *Chryſoſtom* takes Notice of three Faults that may be reckoned in it. Firſt, The little Conſideration *Peter* had of our Saviour's Predictions concerning his Fall. Secondly, The Preference which he gave himſelf above the Reſt of his Brethren: And Thirdly,

Thirdly, The Preſumption he places in his own Strength, inſtead of imploring Ability of him, whence all human Sufficiency is derived; and therefore the Son of God, ſays he, ſuffered him to fall, in order to cure his Arrogance and vain Confidence in himſelf.

OUR Saviour's Obſervation, that though *the Spirit was willing, yet the Fleſh was weak*, are not intended, as an Excuſe or Mitigation of the Apoſtles ſinful Neglect of their Maſter, but as a Motive to their Vigilance and Prayer, and ſeem to imply thus much,——*You have all made large Promiſes*, that if you ſhould die with me, you would not forſake me; *and this you ſaid really, and with a Promiſe to do it: Yet let me tell you, when the Temptation actually aſſaults, when Fear, Shame and Pain, the Danger of Puniſhment, and of Death, are within View, and preſent to your Senſe, the Weakneſs of the Fleſh will certainly prevail over theſe Reſolutions, if you uſe not the greateſt Vigilance, and do not pray with Fervency for the divine Aſſiſtance.*

THE Words in the original Text, concerning our Lord's ſweating large Drops of Blood, but only that it was thick and viſcous, like Blood falling from the Noſe, in a ſmall Clot, at the End of any one's Bleeding; but, ſince in ſome Diſtemper (as *Ariſtotle* tells us) it is no uncommon Thing for People to ſweat Blood; and, when Men are bitten with a certain Kind of Serpents in *India* (according to the Account of *Diodorus Siculus*) they are tormented with exceſſive Pains, and generally ſeized with a bloody Sweat, we cannot ſee, why this Agony of our Saviour's might not be ſo violent, as to force Blood out of his Capillary Veſſels, and mix it with Sweat.

ST. *Luke* is the only *Evangeliſt* that makes mention of the Attendance of an Angel upon our Saviour, in this Time of his Agony; and as there were ſeveral, both *Latin* and *Greek* Copies, that, in St. *Jerom*'s Time wanted this Part of the Hiſtory, *Epiphanes* imagines,

imagines, that this was a Correction of ſome ignorant, though, perhaps, well meaning *Chriſtians*, who, being offended at the ſuppoſed Weakneſs that appears in our Saviour, upon this Occaſion, left it out of their Copies; never conſidering that the Divinity which dwelled in him, had, at this Time, ſubſtracted its Influence, ſo that being left to his human Nature only, he needed the Comfort of an Angel: Otherwiſe, as with a Word, he made the whole Band of Soldiers fall to the Ground, and with a Touch healed the Ear of *Malchus*, he even now gave ſufficient Indications of the Divinity reſiding in him.

AT the Time of the Paſſover, it was cuſtomary for the *Roman* Preſident to ſend a whole Band of a thouſand Men, for a Guard to the Temple; and it ſeems to be ſome of theſe that came to apprehend our Saviour, becauſe, by *Judas*'s giving them a Sign, whereby they might know him, it looks as if they were Strangers to his Perſon.

IT is probable he thought they could not apprehend our Saviour, but that, as *Jeſus* had, at other Times, conveyed himſelf from the Multitude, when they attempted to ſtone him, *John* viii. 59. and to caſt him down a Precipice, *Luke* iv. 30. ſo he would have done now; and that, when he found he did not reſcue himſelf, *he repented and hanged himſelf*, Matt. xxvii. 5.

THE Reproof is expreſſed in theſe Words,—— Judas *betrayeſt thou the Son of Man with a Kiſs?* Luke xxii. 18. Firſt, To betray, in this Caſe, was equivalent to Murder. It was to deliver him into their Hands, who he knew, both from common Rumour, and his Maſter's own Words, *Matt.* xvi. 21. had a Deſign upon his Life; and therefore this could not be done without expreſs Malice; but Secondly, This Betrayer was a Servant, one who had given up his Name and Faith to our Lord, and done himſelf the Honour, at leaſt, if no other Benefit,

to

to preach his Goſpel, and to work Miracles by the Power of his Commiſſion; and therefore, for ſuch an one to betray him, could not be done without great Perfidiouſneſs. Thirdly, The Perſon betrayed is called the *Son of Man*, which is both the humbleſt and moſt obliging of our Saviour's Titles, and implies that even to *Judas* himſelf he had always been a kind and gracious Maſter, had treated him with the ſame Reſpect, and given him the ſame Advice and Overtures, that he had done to the reſt of the Twelve; and therefore to betray him was high Ingratitude. Fourthly, and laſtly, to betray him with a Kiſs, which all the World had been uſed to interpret as a conſtant Symbol either of Love, or Homage, (both which his Maſter had ſo well merited at his Hands) and now to make this a Signal of his Treaſon, was to play a Piece of the moſt groſs Hypocriſy. So ſevere is the Accuſation, which our Lord brings againſt his abandoned Apoſtle, tho' expreſſed in the mildeſt Terms!

BEFORE our Saviour left the Houſe where he ſupped, he had ſaid to his Apoſtles, *He that has no Sword, let him ſell his Garment and buy one*, Luke xxii. 56. but that this is no Command to them to buy Swords, or to uſe them in the Defence of their Maſter, when he ſhould be apprehended, is apparent from his ſaying, that two Swords were enough, *ver.* 38. which certainly could never be ſufficient to repel that Band of armed Men, which he foreknew would come againſt him; and from his reprehending *Peter* for uſing one in this Manner, *Matt.* xxvi. 52. which, if he intended his Words to be underſtood literally, was no diſcommendable Thing. They therefore are only an Admonition to his Apoſtles, that Times were now become ſo perilous, that if Things were to be acted by human Power, there would be more need for Swords than ever; for ſuch ſymbolical Ways of Expreſſion were very common among the *Eaſtern* People. Some Annotators, how-

ever, have obſerved, that the Reaſon why any Swords (as we read but of two) were found in our Saviour's Family, was, that thereby they might ſecure themſelves from Beaſts of Prey, which in thoſe Parts, were very frequent, and dangerous in the Night-time.

OUR Saviour's Words to *Peter*, are theſe, *Put up thy Sword into its Place, for all that take the Sword, ſhall periſh by the Sword*, Matt. xxvi. 52. But this Rebuke we muſt not ſo underſtand, as abſolutely forbidding all Manner of uſing the Sword among *Chriſtians*, but only as teaching us the great Duty of Submiſſion to the Powers that are ſet over us. One private Perſon is, no doubt, in Defence of himſelf againſt the Aſſault of another private Perſon, permitted to unſheath his Sword; but if he once granted, that private Perſons, when they think themſelves injured by Magiſtrates, may take up the Sword againſt them, Tumults would be endleſs, and the Authority of the Laws, and the Deciſion of Judges precarious: *If therefore neither the Malice of the* Jews, *nor the Innocence of our Lord; if neither the Truth of our Religion, perſecuted in its Founder, nor the apparent Marks of Malice and Envy, of Violence and Oppreſſion, which appeared in the whole Courſe of their Perſecution of him, were ſufficient to warrant St.* Peter *to draw the Sword, in his Defence, againſt the legal Authority, by which they acted, we muſt conclude, that neither will any of theſe Pretences ſuffice to juſtify any other Chriſtians in the like Circumſtances now: But if it pleaſe God, at any Time, to permit the lawful Powers to be againſt us, we muſt ſubmit patiently to their Authority, and not, with this warm Apoſtle, draw the Sword againſt thoſe to whom God has committed the Power of the Sword.* It may be queſtioned, however, whether this is the true Import of the Words, which *Grotius*, and ſome others have thus interpreted,—— *Put up thy Sword; there is no need for thy uſing it in my Defence againſt the Injuries of the* Jews; *for*

for by God's Sentence and Decree, they who take the Sword, to ſhed the Blood of the Innocent, ſhall periſh by the Sword; and this the Jews *ſhall find, by the tremendous Vengeance, which the Sword of the* Romans *ſhall execute upon them for this Fact.* Which Interpretation is confirmed by what we read in *Rev.* xiii. 10. *He that killeth with the Sword, muſt be killed with the Sword.* Here is the Ground *of the Faith and Patience of the Saints*, viz. that God, to whom Vengeance belongs, will plead their Cauſe, and recompence Vengeance to their Enemies.

A *Legion*, in the *Roman* Militia, was a Body of Men conſiſting of ſix Thouſand, compoſed each of ten *Cohorts*, as a Cohort was of fifty *Maniples*, and a Maniple of fifteen Men; ſo that twelve Legions would amount to ſeventy-two Thouſand Angels; but in this our Saviour means no more than a great Number.

WHO the young Man was, who fled away naked out of the Hands of the Soldiers, who took him for one of *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, has been a Matter of ſome Diſpute among the Ancients. *Epiphanius* and St. *Jerom* are of Opinion, that it was *James* the Brother of our Lord; but upon our Lord's being apprehended, he, among the reſt, forſook him, and fled, and we hear nothing of his Return. St. *Chryſoſtom*, *Ambroſe*, and *Gregory* have a ſtrong Imagination that it was *John*, the beloved Apoſtle; but *John*, we rend, was with *Chriſt* in the Garden, cloathed, and cannot therefore eaſily conceive how he came to fly naked. It ſeems moſt probable therefore, that this young Man might be no ways related to our Saviour, but, hearing a Noiſe in the Garden, which might not be far diſtant from the Houſe, where he lodged, in the Village of *Gethſemane*, he aroſe and followed the Company in his Night-gown (as we have rendered it) in pure Curioſity to ſee what was the Matter, and when the Guards were for ſeizing him, he fled

away naked, *i. e.*. with nothing but his Shirt on, for ſo the Expreſſion may be underſtood.

HERE let us reſume our Story.

THE Company thus carrying away *Jeſus*, brought him before *Annas*, who was Father-in-Law to *Caiaphas* the High-prieſt, and had formerly born the ſame Office: But *Annas* ſent them to *Caiaphas*, in whoſe Palace the *Sanhedrim* was ſtill ſitting, even tho' it was thus late at Night. *Caiaphas* examined him a great deal concerning both his Doctrine and Diſciples; but when our Saviour anſwered, "That, "ſince he had always taught in the moſt publick "Manner in the Synagogues and in the Temple, "he ſhould rather enquire of thoſe who had been "his conſtant Hearers," an Officer ſtanding by, gave him a Blow on the Face, pretending that he had not uſed the High-prieſt with Reſpect enough; to which our Lord only replied, *that if he had ſaid any Thing amiſs, the Law was open, and he might implead him, but if not, he had no Cauſe or Authority to ſtrike him.*

THE Council perceiving, that, from his own Confeſſion, they could raiſe no Accuſation againſt him, called over the falſe Witneſſes, that they had procured; but theſe, either diſagreed in their Stories, or came not ſufficiently up to the Point. Two Perſons indeed were conſiſtent in what they depoſed, *viz.* that they had heard him ſay, *that he would pull down the Temple of God, and in three Days rebuild it.* But, as this Accuſation was falſe in Fact, and founded only upon a figurative Expreſſion of our Saviour's, it was not thought to amount to any thing capital.

ALL this while our Saviour made no Manner of Reply to the Evidences that were produced againſt him; whereof when the High-prieſt aſked the Reaſon, and ſtill he continued ſilent, having one more Queſtion in Reſerve, which if he anſwered in the *negative*, (would according to his Notion) make him an Impoſtor, and if in the *affirmative*, a Blaſphemer, he ſtood up, and, in the Name *of the living God*, *adjured*

adjured him to declare, whether he was the Meſſiah, *the Son of God, or not.* The Reverence which our Lord paid to that ſacred Name, made him immediately anſwer, and that in direct Terms, *That he was; and of this they would be convinced, when they ſhould ſee him ſitting on the Right-hand of the Almighty, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven.* Whereupon the High-prieſt, in Teſtimony of his Abhorrence, rent his Clothes, as if he had heard the groſſeſt Blaſphemy, and then addreſſing himſelf to the Council, told them, that there was no Occaſion for any farther Witneſſes, becauſe what the Priſoner ſaid was palpable Blaſphemy, and ſo demanded their Opinion, who unanimouſly agreed, that, according to their Law, he was guilty of Death.

WITH this Reſolution they repaired to their reſpective Homes (for now it was late) and left our Lord to the Mercy of the Soldiers, and the High-prieſt's Servants, who offered all the Acts of Inſolence and Affrontery that they could invent, to his ſacred Perſon; whilſt ſome ſpit on him, others buffeted him, others blindfolded him, and others again ſmiting him with their Fiſts, called on him to prophecy *who it was that ſtruck him*; with many more Indignities, and abominable Blaſphemies, which muſt have been greater than all Patience, had his Meekneſs and Patience been leſs than infinite.

DURING this melancholy Scene, *Peter*, whoſe Fears had made him fly from his Maſter in the Garden, having a little recovered his Spirits, and hoping to paſs undiſcovered in the Throng, ventured in, among othres, to ſee the Iſſue of this fatal Night; and by the Intereſt of his Fellow-Diſciple, *John*, (who went with him) was let in by a Maid-ſervant to the High-prieſt's Palace. It was now cold Weather; and the Servants and Officers having kindled a Fire in the Common-hall, *Peter* went in, and ſat down among them to warm himſelf; when the Maid, who let him in, fixing her Eyes upon him,

him, was confident ſhe knew him, and accordingly told the Company, that he was a Diſciple of *Jeſus of Nazareth*, which he poſitively denied to them all, and, as he withdrew into the Porch, heard the Cock crow, but his troubled Thoughts took no Notice of it.

WHILE he was in the Porch, another Maid charged him with the ſame Thing, but he denied it again, not only with the ſame Confidence, but with the Solemnity of an Oath; and, about an Hour after, when another inferred from his Dialect, that he muſt neceſſarily be a *Galilean*; and a Relation of the Man, whoſe Ear he had cut off, ſtrongly affirmed, that *he ſaw him in the Garden*; this ſo intimidated him, that, with horrid Oaths and Imprecations upon himſelf, he denied the Matter; till the Cock crew the ſecond Time, and our Saviour (who was then in the Hall) turning to *Peter*, gave him ſuch a Glance, as reminded him of his Prediction, and the Foulneſs of his own Crime; whereupon, being ſtung with Compunction, and ſadly oppreſſed with Shame and Grief, he went out, and wept; he wept abundantly, he wept bitterly.

EARLY next Morning (*Good Friday*) the *Sanhedrim* met again in a full Body, at their Room in the Temple, whither they ordered *Jeſus* to be brought; and, having again enquired of him, whether he was the true *Meſſiah*, and the *Son of God*, and again receiving the ſame Anſwer from him, they adjudged him guilty of Blaſphemy; and, accordingly, having condemned him, carried him to the *Roman* Governor, whoſe Name, at that Time, was *Pontius Pilate*, deſiring of him to ratify their Sentence, and demanded a Warrant for his Execution.

JUDAS, in the mean Time, watching the Iſſue of theſe Proceedings, and finding that his Maſter was delivered to the ſecular Power, repented of his Perfidy, and taking the Money, which was the Reward of his Treaſon, went to the Council, and threw

threw it among them, declaring openly, that he had acted very wickedly *in betraying the innocent Blood*: But, as the People that employ ſuch Inſtruments, have no Regard to what becomes of them, all the Comfort that he had from them was, that, *ſince it was his own Act and Deed, it was his Buſineſs to look to it, not theirs*; ſo that, being tortured with Agonies of Guilt, and finding no Relief any where, he went, and hanged himſelf; but in his Death there was ſomething ſo particular, that it made all the Inhabitants of *Jeruſalem* take notice of it. The Money however, which he threw among the Council, the Prieſts thought not proper to put into the Treaſury, becauſe it was the *Price of Blood*, and therefore they purchaſed with it a Spot of Ground, then called the *Potters Field*, (but, afterwards, the *Field of Blood*) for a Place of Interment for Strangers.

ONCE more let us review what we have advanced in the laſt Period.

ANNAS (who by *Joſephus* is called *Ananus*) had been High-Prieſt, enjoyed that Dignity for eleven Years; and, even after he was depoſed, retained ſtill the Title, and had a great Share of the Management of all publick Affairs. When *John the Baptiſt* entered upon the Exerciſe of his Miniſtry, he is called the High-prieſt in Conjunction with *Caiaphas*, *Luke* iii. 2. though, at that Time, he did not act in this Character, and, when our Saviour was apprehended, he was firſt brought to his Houſe, according to St. *John*, ch. xviii. 14. though the other *Evangeliſts* paſs that over in Silence, becauſe there was nothing done to him there; and it looks, as if he had been only detained there, until the Council, met at the Houſe of *Caiaphas*, was ready for him.

SOME of the Ancients are of Opinion, that this Officer was *Malchus*, the ſame Perſon, whoſe Ear our Lord had healed in the Garden. The more ungrateful he! And *Selden* pretends, that in this Act, he

he did nothing contrary to the Law of his Country, which allowed every *Iſraelite*, by what they call *the Judgment of Zeal*, to avenge, upon the Spot, all publick Injury done to God, or his Temple, to the Nation in general, or the High-prieſt in particular.

FROM the Defence which our Saviour makes for himſelf, we may learn, that we are not literally to underſtand his Precept *of turning the other Cheek to him that ſmites us*, ſince, inſtead of doing this, we find him endeavouring to vindicate the Innocence of his Words; and from hence we may obſerve likewiſe, that to ſtand upon the Defence of our own Innocency, cannot be contrary to the *Chriſtian* Duties of Patience and Forgiveneſs.

THE *Jews* in general, but eſpecially their Judges and Magiſtrates, had a Cuſtom of conjuring by the Name of God, or of exacting an Oath of thoſe, whoſe Crimes did not ſufficiently appear by the Evidence of Witneſſes, or any other Means. The Perſon, thus interrogated, was obliged to ſpeak Truth; and, in all doubtful Caſes, his Confeſſion or Denial was deciſive, and either to acquit or condemn himſelf.

THE Rending the Clothes was a Token of Indignation, holy Zeal, and Piety, among the *Jews*, expreſſed on ſeveral Occaſions, eſpecially of Grief, in *Humiliation*; and of Anger, on hearing any blaſphemous Speech. This however was forbidden the High-prieſt, not only as to his ſacerdotal Veſtments, but alſo as to his other Garments, becauſe he was not to appear before God in the Habit of a Mourner; but they, by their Traditions, had ſo qualified that Precept, as to allow him to rend his Clothes at the Bottom, though he was not permitted to do it from the Top to the Breaſt.

FROM the High-prieſt's rending his Clothes, as ſuppoſing *Chriſt* had ſpoke the groſſeſt Blaſphemy, we may obſerve, that the *Jews* of that Age did not think,

think, that the *Meſſiah* was to be *GOD*, but only a *Man*, who could not challenge to himſelf *Divinity*; ſeeing they never concluded our Lord to be a Blaſphemer, becauſe he ſaid he was the *Chriſt*, but only becauſe he ſaid he *was the Son of God*, and thereby made himſelf *equal with God*.

THE *Jews* themſelves allow (as Dr. *Lightfoot* informs us) that there might be Froſt and Snow at the Time of the Paſſover; and a common Thing it was for great Dews to fall then, which would make the Air cold, until the Sun had exhaled them.

IT is reported of St. *Peter*, that, ever after, when he heard the Cock crow, he wept, remembring the old Inſtrument of his Repentance and Converſion, and his own Unworthineſs, for which he never ceaſed to do Acts of Sorrow and Penance.

THE *Galileans* ſpake the ſame Language that the reſt of the *Jews* did; but then they had a certain uncouth Accent, and Manner of Expreſſion, which diſtinguiſhed them from others, and made them to be contemned and ridiculed by the Natives of *Judea*.

SOME of the Ancients have taken great Pains to extenuate the horrid Oaths and Imprecations of St. *Peter* with which he denied *Chriſt*. St. *Ambroſe* on *Luke*, and *Hilary* on *Matthew*, both aſſert, that the Apoſtle did not lye, in ſaying, *I know not the Man*, but only diſguiſed the Truth, renouncing *Chriſt* in the Quality of a *Man*, but not the *Son of God*. But this (according to St. *Jerom*) *is to defend the Servant, by accuſing the Maſter of a Lye*; for if St. *Peter* did not actually deny him, our Lord muſt have falſly affirmed, *thou ſhalt deny me thrice*. The Opinion of thoſe therefore is rather to be embraced, who acknowledge that St. *Peter*, by denying *Chriſt* with his Mouth, committed a mortal Sin, and fell from Grace; and, as it is certain, that, by confirming this Denial with an Oath, and adding horrid Execrations to it, his Sin was highly aggravated, inſtead

of accounting (as ſome do) his Denial a Sin of Infirmity, wherein his Heart was true, though his Mouth was falſe, we can hardly think, that he could do all this without great Checks of Conſcience; and that, conſequently, for the preſent, he was in a Sate of Defection, though his bitter Weeping, and quick Repentance, after that *Chriſt* had looked upon him, might make an Attonement for his Tranſgreſſion.

THE Aſſembly, which was held the Night before, and wherein our Saviour was declared worthy of Death, was neither *general* nor *judicial*, according to the Senſe of the Law, which did not allow of Juſtice to be adminiſtered in private, or in the Night-time: And therefore the High-prieſts and Rulers met again in the Morning, in the Council Chamber in the Temple (which they could not do the Night before, becauſe the Temple was then always ſhut) there to re-examine our Saviour, and condemn him in Form.

AT *Jeruſalem* the People ſhew you, at this Time, the Palace of *Pilate*, or rather the Place, where, they ſay it ſtood, for now an ordinary *Turkiſh* Houſe poſſeſſes its Room. In this pretended Houſe, (which ſtands not far from St. *Stephen*'s Gate, and borders on the *Area* of the Temple, on the *North-ſide*) they ſhew you a Room, in which Chriſt was mocked with the Enſigns of Royalty, and buffeted by the Soldiers; and, on the other Side of the Street, (which was antiently another Part of the Palace) is the Room, where they ſay our Lord was ſcourged.

IT is not certainly known of what Family, or Country, this Governor *Pontius Pilate* was, though it is generally believed that he was of *Rome*, at leaſt of *Italy*. He ſucceeded *Gratus* in the Government of *Judæa*, in which he continued fourteen Years, *i. e.* from the Twelfth, to the Twenty ſecond of *Tiberius*, and is repreſented by *Philo* (*de Legatione ad Caium*)

Caium) as a Man of an impetuous and obſtinate Temper: and a Judge, who uſed to ſell Juſtice, and for Money pronounce any Sentence, that was deſired. The ſame Author makes mention of his Rapines, his Injuries, his Murders, the Torment, he he inflicted upon the Innocent, and the Perſons, he put to Death without any Form of Proceſs. In ſhort, he deſcribes him as a Man, that exerciſed an exceſſive Cruelty, during the whole Time of his Government, from which he was depoſed by *Vitellius*, the Proconſul of *Syria*; arriving at *Rome*, the Emperor *Caligula* baniſhed him to *Vienna* in *Gaul*, where he was reduced to ſuch Extermity, that he killed himſelf with his own Hands. The Evangeliſts call him *Governor*, (though, properly ſpeaking, he was no more, than the *Procurator* of *Judæa*) not only becauſe *Governor*, was a Name of general Uſe, but becauſe *Pilate* acted as one, by taking upon him to judge in criminal Matters as his Predeceſſors had done, and other *Procurators* in the ſmall Provinces of the Empire, where there was no *Proconſul*, conſtantly did.

SUCH is the Purchaſe of Treaſon, and the Reward of Covetouſneſs. It is cheap in its Offers, momentary in its Poſſeſſion, unſatisfying in its Fruition, uncertain in its Stay, ſudden in its Deparure, horrid in the Remembrance, and a Ruin, a certain and miſerable Ruin in the Event.

THOUGH the original Words for *he went and hanged himſelf* may perhaps mean no more, than his falling into a violent ſuffocating Fit of Sadneſs and Deſpair, which might ſtop all the Natural Paſſages, and ſo, for want of Vent, make him burſt aſunder, and his Guts break out at his Navel; yet to me the moſt natural and obvious Signification of the Word is preferable. The only Difficulty is, how to reconcile his *hanging of himſelf* with what is elſewhere recorded of him, *viz.* that, *falling headlong, he burſt aſunder in the midſt, and all his Bowels guſhed out,*

Acts i. 18. But to this Purpoſe the Conjectures of ſeveral have been various. Some think, that he hanged himſelf on a Tree, but that, the Branch yielding, and bending to the Ground, he was not, at that Time, ſtrangled, but afterwards fell into a Dropſy, of which he burſt and died. Others imagine, that he threw himſelf from ſome Place, higher than that, on which he intended to hang himſelf, and that, by the Force of the Swing, when he caſt himſelf off, the Rope broke, ſo that he fell to the Ground, and burſt. Others ſuppoſe, that, as he might hang himſelf in ſome private Place, he probably there continued, untill his Belly ſwelled, (as it commonly happens to ſuch, as die in that Manner) and, in a ſhort Time his Bowels burſt out: And for this they have the Authoriy of ſome Copies, which, inſtead of *falling down headlong*, have, *thus hanging, he burſt aſunder, and all his Bowels guſhed out*. But, in whatever Manner this came to paſs, I cannot ſee, why, in this extraordinary Inſtance, we may not admit of more than ordinary Providence, to make the Death of this Traitor more remarkable.

IT was a Cuſtom among the *Jews*, which was afterwards imitated by the firſt *Chriſtians*, that it ſhould not be lawful for Executioners to offer any Thing, or for any Alms to be received of them; and ſo, by Analogy, any Money with which a Life was bought, was not to be put into the Treaſury.

THE Valley of *Jehoſhaphat* runs croſs the Mouth of another Valley, called the Valley of *Hinnon*, lying at the Bottom of Mount *Sion*. On the Weſt-ſide of the Valley is the Place called *the Potters Field*, where, not improbably, the People of that Trade were uſed to dry their Pots, before they baked them. It was afterwards called the *Field of Blood*, for the Reaſon that the *Evangeliſt* aſſigns; but at preſent from the Veneration which it has obtained among

Chriſtians,

Chriſtians, it is named *Campo Sancto*, or the *Holy Field*. It is a ſmall Plat of Ground, not above thirty Yards long, and about half as much broad; and one Moiety of it is taken up by a ſquare Fabrick, about twelve Yards high, built for a Charnel-houſe, and covered over with a Vault, in which are ſome Openings, to let down the Bodies that are to be buried there. The Earth muſt certainly be impregnated with a very corroſive Salt, if what ſome tell us be true, *viz.* that it can diſſolve a Body in the Space of twenty-four Hours. Thoſe however who have looked down through the Opening, tell us, they could ſee many Bodies under ſeveral Degrees of Decay, from whence they conjectured, that this Grave does not make ſuch quick Diſpatch with the Corps committed to it, as is commonly reported. The *Armenians* have the Command of this Burying-place, for which they pay to the *Turks* a Rent of a *Zequin* a-Day; and, a little below the *Campo Sancto*, is ſhewn an intricate Cave, or a Sepulchre, conſiſting of ſeveral Rooms, one within another, in which the Apoſtles are ſaid to have hid themſelves, when they forſook their Maſter and fled.

THE Strangers, for whom the *Potters Field* was deſigned a Burying-place, may be either Men of other Nations, with whom the *Jews* would have no Commerce, even when they were dead, and therefore provided a ſeparate Burying-place for them; or they might be *Jews*, who coming from *Jeruſalem* to ſacrifice, died there, before their Return Home, and ſo the Prieſts provided a Burying-place for them.

LET us now proceed in our Relation:

WHEN the Members of the *Sanhedrim* came to the Governor's Palace, they refuſed to go into the *Judgment-hall*, for fear of contracting ſome Pollution, and therefore *Pilate* went out to them; and as he underſtood that they had already paſſed Sentence upon him, he demanded the Grounds of their Accuſation againſt him: But, being unwilling that any Enquiry

ſhould

ſhould be made into the Particulars of their Proceedings, they anſwered in general, that, *if he were not a Criminal, they would not have have brought him to him.* Imagining therefore that the Proſecution was about ſome Matters relating to their *Religion*, the Governor deſired, they would take him, and judge him according to their own *Law*; but to this they replied, *that it was not permitted them to put any Man to Death.*

By theſe reſerved Anſwers, *Pilate* perceiving that their Intention was to make him the Inſtrument of their Malice againſt an innocent Man, refuſed to intermeddle in the Affair, unleſs they would exhibit ſome Articles of Accuſation againſt him. Knowing therefore that *Herod* was a Creature of the *Roman* Court, and a Slave to its Greatneſs, they alledged againſt our Lord, That he was guilty of ſeditious Practices, of diſſuading the Payment of the Tribute to *Cæſar*, and of ſetting himſelf up for a King. *Pilate* hearing the Name of a King, thought himſelf concerned to examine that Point; and therefore returning to the Judgment hall, and ſeating himſelf upon the Tribunal, he aſked *Jeſus*, whether *he was the King of the Jews?* which our Lord never pretended to deny; but then he informed the Governor, that *his Kingdom was not of this World*, and could therefore give no Umbrage to the *Romans*; for that, had it been a worldly Kingdom, his Subjects and Followers would certainly have fought for him, and ſaved him from the Hands of the *Jews*. When *Pilate* heard that he diſclaimed all Right to ſecular Kingdoms, he thought he had nothing to do to examine him about the Nature of his ſpiritual Empire; and therefore withdrawing from the Court into the *Veſtibulum*, (where his Accuſers were impatiently expecting the Ratification of their Sentence, in order to Execution) contrary to their Hopes, he plainly told them, that he found *nothing worth of Death in him.*

UPON this Diſappointment the Chief-prieſts and Elders grew exceedingly fierce and clamorous, repreſenting our Lord as a turbulent Mover of the People, and charging him with the ſpreading of ſeditious Principles, through all *Galilee* and *Judea*, even as far as *Jeruſalem*. *Pilate* hearing them name *Galilee*, and underſtanding that he was a *Galilean*, and, conſequently belong'd to *Herod*'s Juriſdiction; in order to get rid of the Importunity of the *Jews*, and withal to free himſelf from this odd and puzzling Affair, he ſent him immediately to *Herod*, who was then at *Jeruſalem* upon the Occaſion of the Feaſt. *Herod* was no leſs proud of the Honour done him by *Pilate*, than glad of this Opportunity to gratify his Curioſity. For, having heard much of our Saviour's Fame, he expected to ſee ſome Miracle or other done by him, but found himſelf ſadly diſappointed. For, tho' the Scribes and Rulers purſued him with their Accuſations to *Herod's* Palace, and *Herod*, in hearing the Cauſe, aſked him ſeveral Queſtions, yet he would not vouchſafe ſo much as one Anſwer; which made the *Tetrarch* look upon him as an inſignificant deſpicable Perſon; and, accordingly, having committed him to the Deriſions and Inſults of his Guards, who uſed him in the utmoſt Indignity, he ſent him back again to *Pilate*, arrayed in a white Robe; whether it was to make a Mock of him, or to vindicate his Innocence, or both; but ſo it was, that, from that Time, *Herod* and *Pilate* (who before were at great Variance) were upon this Occaſion, perfectly reconciled.

WHEN our Lord was remanded back in this Manner, *Pilate* addreſſed himſelf to the Prieſts and Rulers of the People, telling them, "That, tho' they had brought this Man before him, as a ſeditious Perſon, and a Seducer of the People, yet, upon Examination, he could not find him guilty of any of the Crimes, that were laid to his Charge; that this was not his own Opinion only, but that *Herod* (who

was

was a more competent Judge of the Affair, and to whom he had ſent him, on purpoſe to take Cognizance of it) had no ways ſignified that his Crimes were capital; and therefore, inſtead of taking away his Life, he propoſed ſome leſſer Puniſhment, if they thought fit, ſuch as ſcourging him a little with Whips, and ſo diſmiſſing him." But this Lenity was ſo diſagreeable to their inraged Temper, that they peremptorily demanded Execution, ſaying, *Crucify him, crucify him. Pilate*, ſtill tender of ſhedding innocent Blood, expoſtulated the Matter with them, deſiring to know what *Evil he had done*, for as for his Part, he could find no Fault in him, much leſs any Crimes deſerving of Death; but this did but the more exaſperate, and made them more clamorous for ſpeedy Execution.

THE Governor had one Expedient more, which he thought would not fail him. Every Paſſover he was obliged by a certain Cuſtom, to pardon one Criminal, whom the *Jews* ſhould nominate, and therefore when the People came, and were urgent with him to grant them that uſual Favour, he propoſed two Perſons to them, *Barabbas*, a notorious Malefactor, who, in an Inſurrection with ſome other *ſeditious* Perſons had committed Murther, and *Jeſus*, who was called *Chriſt*, never doubting, but that the Populace, who he knew were better inclined to our Lord, than their Rulers, would have perſerred an innocent Man, before a Thief and a Murtherer; but, at the Inſtigation of their Prieſts, and others, they required, that the Favour might be granted to *Barabbas*. Hereupon, when the *Governor* deſired to know, what he was to do with the Perſon, whom they called *Chriſt*, they, one and all, cried out *Crucify him, crucify him:* and as he ſtill inſiſted on his Innocence, and propoſed ſome *lighter* Puniſhment (which was all, to be ſure, that he could deſerve) they began to redouble their Clamours, and, in the moſt tumultuous Manner

Manner imaginable, demanded that he might be *crucified.*

THE *Governor*, in the mean Time, received a Meſſage from his Wife, deſiring him, by no means, to condemn the innocent Perſon, that was then before him, becauſe upon his Account, ſhe had that Night many frightful and uneaſy Dreams, which made him the more earneſt to releaſe him, or at leaſt to ſpare his Life; and therefore in hopes of pacifying the People's Rage, he ordered him to be ſcourged. The Soldiers, who were to do this, thinking it not enough to execute their Orders, took him into the Common-hall, where ſtripping him of his own Cloaths, they put a looſe purple Coat about him, for a Robe; a Wreath of Thorns upon his Head, for a Crown; and a Reed in his Hand, for a Sceptre; and then in Deriſion, ſaluted him, and bowing their Knees, mocked him with the ſham Profeſſion of Allegiance. After this they ſpit in his Face, ſmote him on the Cheek, and (to make his Crown of Thorns pierce the deeper) ſtruck him on the Head with his fantaſtick Sceptre; and then leading him to a Pillar (where they tied him faſt) they ſcourged him with Whips, and with ſuch unrelenting Cruelty, that his tender Fleſh was torn in Pieces, and the Pavement crimſoned with his precious Blood.

IN this piteous Plight, with his Head, Face, and Body imbrued in Blood, and with his mock Ornaments on, *Pilate*, in hopes of moving the People's Compaſſion, ordered him to be brought forth, and when he appeared, *See the Man*, ſays he, *this rueful Spectacle of ſuffering Innocence!* But ſo far were they from melting at the Sight of ſo deplorable an Object, that they raiſed their Cries ſtill louder and louder for his Crucifixion; and when the Governor ſtill inſiſted on his Innocence, *we have a a Law*, ſaid they, *and by our Law he ought to die, becauſe he made himſelf the Son of God.*

THESE laſt Words raiſed ſome Terror in *Pilate*, and gave him more Uneaſineſs: For, taking them in ſuch a Senſe as an *Heathen* might well put upon them, he began to apprehend, that, if he ſhould proceed to Sentence againſt him, he might deſtroy not only an innocent Perſon, but poſſibly ſome Hero, or mighty Demi-god, and ſo at once commit an Act of Injuſtice and Impiety both. He therefore, returning with *Jeſus* to the Judgment-Seat again, began to enquire into his Original and Pedigree: But, as it was no Part of our Saviour's Intention to eſcape Death, he thought it not proper to ſay any Thing in his own Juſtification; until, his Silence having given the Governor ſome Offence (inſomuch that he put him in mind, that his Life or Death, his Releaſe or Crucifixion, depended on him) he then replied, that ſuch Power he could not have over him, *were it not permitted him from above, and that therefore they, who had delivered him up, had the greater Sin to anſwer for, than he.*

THIS Anſwer made *Pilate* ſtill the more deſirous to releaſe him; which when the *Jews* perceived, they found out at laſt this Expedient, to work upon his Fears, by telling him plainly, *that, if he did not puniſh a Man who ſet himſelf up for a King, he was an Enemy to the Emperor*; a Menace which he, who knew the jealous Temper of his Maſter *Tiberius* full well, and how eaſily a wrong Repreſentation of theſe Proceedings might prove his Ruin, had not the Courage to withſtand: And therefore, returning to the Hall he ordered *Jeſus* to be brought, in the ſame Habit, to his publick Tribunal, which ſtood in a paved Place, called *Gabatha*, and, before he gave Sentence calling for Water, and waſhing his Hands before all the People, he ſolemnly declared, that he was *innocent of the Blood of that juſt Man*, and *that they muſt anſwer for it*; whereupon the whole Body of the People cried out, *May his Blood fall upon us and our Poſterity*. An Imprecation as black

as

as Hell, and which has been too long (may it pleaſe the Almighty to ſhorten their Puniſhment!) verified upon them.

HERE, as uſual, we ſhall illuſtrate what has been advanced.

THE *Sanhedrim* refuſed to go into the Judgment-hall, becauſe in the Governor's Palace there was a Guard of *Roman* Soldiers, and a great Company of Servants; and, as they were Heathens, they thought that, by touching any of them, they ſhould be defiled, and conſequently made incapable of eating the *Paſſover*, of which no unclean Perſon was to partake. By the *Paſſover* however, here in *John*, Chap. xviii. 28. we are not to underſtand the *Paſchal Lamb*, which the reſt of the *Jews*, as well as our Saviour, had eaten the Night before, but the *Chagigah*, or Peace-Offering, *i. e.* the Sheep and Oxen, that were offered all the ſeven Days of the Feaſt, and are expreſly called the *Paſſover*, Luke xxii. 1. Thus the *Jewiſh* Doctors remark upon Deut. xvi. 2. *Thou ſhall ſacrifice the* Paſſover *to the Lord, of the Flock, and of the Herd*, that the *Flock* ſignifies the *Lambs*, which were eaten on the 14th, and the *Herd*, the Offerings of the *Chagigah*, which were conſumed on the 15th Day of the Month *Niſan*. The *Jewiſh* Rulers therefore would not go into the Judgment-hall, that they might not be unfit to eat the *Paſſover*, *i. e.* thoſe *Paſchal* Offerings of the *Herd*, which were holy Things, and of which none might eat in their Defilement.

BY the Anſwer of the *Sanhedrim*, *if he were not a Criminal, they would not have brought him to him*, they ſeem willing to make *Pilate*, not ſo much a Judge of the Cauſe, as an Executioner of their Sentence: But there cannot poſſibly be an higher Act of Injuſtice, than to deſire, that a Judge ſhould ſuppoſe the accuſed Perſon guilty of the Crime, without any farther Examination. It is no ſtrange and ex-

traordinary Thing, to ſee innocent Perſons oppreſſed by arbitrary Proceedings, without any legal Proceſs; but for a Man to be brought before a Judge, in order to be delivered up directly to Execution, without any Proof of the Crime, or any Examination concerning it, is a new Way of Oppreſſion, firſt invented and contrived againſt the Saviour of the World.

WHETHER the *Jews* had, at this Time, the *Power of Life and Death*, is a Point, much controverted among the Learned. The Anſwer, which the *Jewiſh* Rulers here give to *Pilate*, and the general Opinion of their *Rabbins*, who ſuppoſe, that their Rulers loſt that Power about forty Years before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, ſeem to incline to the Negative, but thoſe, who take the other Side of the Queſtion, argue thus,——That the *Jews*, when reduced to a *Roman* Province, had ſtill the Privilege granted them, *to uſe the ſacred Inſtitutions and Cuſtoms, that were derived to them from their Fathers*; Joſeph. Antiq. l. c. 17. that it was granted to *Hyrcanus*, the High-Prieſt, that, if any Controverſy ſhould ariſe concerning their Diſcipline, that the Judgment of it ſhould be referred to him; that, purſuant to this Grant, we find the High-Prieſt, and his Council ſtoning *Stephen*, not by the Rage of Zealots, (as ſome conceive) but according to the Law which requires that the Blaſphemer ſhould be ſtoned, *Lev.* xxiv. 16. that *Saul*, armed with the Power of the High-prieſt and Elders, perſecuted the *Jewiſh* Chriſtians unto Death, and led them bound to *Jeruſalem* to be puniſhed, *Acts* xxiii. 4, 5. that the *Jews* would have judged *Paul after his own Law*, *Acts* xxiv. 6. and have put him to Death, *Acts* xxiii. 37. had not *Lyſias*, the chief Captain, reſcued him from their Hands, which they ſay he did by Violence, *i. e.* by an Invaſion of their Rights, but he, becauſe he underſtood that *Paul* was a *Roman*; and from thence they conclude,

conclude, that they ſtill retained the Power of judging, and condemning thoſe to Death, who were *Jews* by Nature and Deſcent, and by their Laws deſerved to die, though, as to ſome Perſons, in ſome Caſes, they had not that Power. Thus when *Annas*, or *Ananus* the High-Prieſt, killed *James*, the Brother of our Lord, and *ſtoned many Chriſtians, as Tranſgreſſors of the Law*, the wiſeſt Part of the Nation (ſays *Joſephus*) diſliked his Proceedings, becauſe he ſhould not have called his Council concerning Life and Death, without a Licence from *Albinus*, the *Roman* Preſident. From whence we may infer, that the Power of inflicting capital Puniſhments, even upon the *Jews*, converted to the *Chriſtian* Faith, was then ſo far taken from them, that they could not regularly do it, without firſt obtaining Leave from the *Roman* Governour; and, in the Caſe of our Bleſſed Saviour, the *Jews* had debarred themſelves from the Power of putting him to death, after they had accuſed him before *Pilate*, not of Crimes committed againſt their Law, but of Sedition, and aſpiring at a Kingdom, to the Prejudice of *Cæſar* and the *Roman* Government, whereof it belonged to *Pilate*, and not to them to judge and determine. And therefore their ſaying to him, *It is not lawful for us to put any Man to Death*, John xviii. 31. is looked upon, either as a kind of Complaint of the Encroachments, which the *Romans* had made upon their civil Conſtitution, or a mere Pretence, ſince *Pilate* gave them Power enough, when he bad them *take him, and judge him according to their Law*; and that the true Reaſons of their bringing him before the *Roman* Tribunal, were, that he might be condemned for Sedition, which would be a Means to ſecure them from the Rage of the People, and that he might be crucified, which was a *Roman* Death, and generally inflicted on thoſe, that were found tampering againſt the Government.

WHEN our Lord's Accuſers came before *Pilate*, they

they ſaid nothing of this pretended Blaſphemy, his Deſtruction of the Temple, or Violation of the Law of *Moſes*, becauſe they were Queſtions, that the Governor, they knew, would not concern himſelf with; and therefore they forged ſuch Accuſations againſt him, as they thought might make him odious and ſuſpected to the *Roman* Government, and oblige *Pilate* to be ſevere againſt him.

BY *Chriſt*'s Anſwer, *that his Kingdom was not of this World*, he means, that it was not of human Original, but from Heaven, and ſo meddled not with the Affairs of the World; that it had none of the Pomp and Splendor of the World annexed to it; none to fight for it with carnal Weapons, and exerciſe Dominion over Mens Bodies, but over their Souls only; that its Government was ſpiritual, and its Judicatories the Courts of *Conſcience*; its Tribute a Conformity to the great Laws of Faith, Hope, and Charity; and its only Impoſts, the Duties of an holy Spirit, and the Expreſſions of a religious Worſhip, a reſigned Will, and a conſenting Underſtanding, in which *Pilate* ſoon perceived that the Intereſt of *Cæſar* could not be invaded.

THEY artfully make mention of *Galilee*, to incite *Pilate* againſt him, as a ſeditious Perſon, to confirm their own Suggeſtion, that he was ſo; for they give him to think, that as he was a *Galilean*, he might probably embrace the Opinion of *Judas Gaulonites*, who had held it not lawful to pay Tribute to *Cæſar*; a Notion, which the Inhabitants of *Galilee* had generally imbibed, and, upon that Account, were always prone to Sedition and Rebellion; for which ſome of them, not long before, had been ſet upon, and ſlain by *Pilate*.

PILATE's Government did not extend to *Galilee*; it included *Judæa* only. *Herod Antipas*, the Son of *Herod the Great*, was, at this Time, King, or *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*, *Jeſus*, conſequently, was his

his Subject; and therefore, according to the *Roman* Laws, it was *Pilate*'s Duty to ſend him to his proper Sovereign, eſpecially as he was accuſed of Rebellion, and a Deſign to make himſelf a King.

THE Words mean properly a *ſplendid Robe*, and do not relate ſo much to the *Colour*, as the *Richneſs* of the Habit.

IT is generally thought, that the Cauſe of the Difference between *Herod* and *Pilate* was the Maſſacre, that *Pilate* made of ſome *Galileans*, at *Jeruſalem*, in the Time of the *Paſſover*, *Luke* xiii. 1. which *Herod* reſented, as an Indignity put upon him, and an Invaſion of his Authority, who was at that Time *Tetrarch* of *Galilee*.

THE Chaſtiſement (which *Pilate* adviſed by Scourging,) was not in order to his Crucifixion, and therefore was not that Puniſhment, which the *Romans* uſed to inflict upon Malefactors as preparative to their Execution, for *Pilate* intended it as a Means to procure his Releaſe; and therefore he ſeemed willing to conſent to it as a Puniſhment, which the *Jews* ſo commonly inflicted upon thoſe, who had acted perverſly againſt their Law, and their Traditions, that he might exempt him from that Sentence, which they were ſo urgent with him to pronounce. But the Reſult of this his Compliance was, that he neither ſaved our Lord, nor preſerved Juſtice. Inſtead of one Puniſhment, the Innocent was made to ſuffer two, being at laſt both ſcourged, and crucified.

As the Feaſt of the *Paſſover* was celebrated by the *Jews* in Memory of their Deliverance from *Egyptian* Bondage, it was very agreeable to the Nature of that Feaſt, and therefore cuſtomary at that Time (tho' practiſed on no other Feſtivals) to make this Releaſe. It is obſerved however, that this Practice was no Cuſtom of the *Jews*, even when they had the Civil Adminiſtration in their Hands, but a Piece of Popularity, or Favour of the Procurator, firſt

brought

brought in by *Pilate*, and afterwards continued by ſome *Chriſtian* Emperors, who, by a general Law, commanded the Judges, that, on the firſt Day of the *Paſſover*, all *Jewiſh* Priſoners, but ſuch as were committed for particular Crimes, ſhould be diſcharged.

FROM the Time of *Tiberius*, the Governours of Provinces were allowed to take their Wives along with them, which was a Privilege not granted them before. This Wife of *Pilate*'s, according to the general Tradition, was named *Claudia Proſcula*; and, in Relation to her Dream, ſome are of Opinion, that, as ſhe had Intelligence of our Lord's Apprehenſion, and knew, by his Character, that he was a righteous Perſon, her Imagination, being ſtruck with theſe Ideas, did naturally produce the Dream we read of. But, as our Saviour was apprehended about Midnight, out of the City, and without *Pilate*'s Privity, and detained in the Houſe of *Annas*, until it was Day, there was no Poſſibility for her having any Notice of it; therefore we have the juſter Reaſon to believe, that this Dream was ſent providentially unto her, for the clearer Manifeſtation of our Lord's Innocence.

WHEN the *Jews* perceived that *Pilate* looked upon the Accuſations, which they brought againſt *Jeſus*, of his being a ſeditious Perſon, and one who aimed at a Kingdom, as idle Suggeſtions, and which had no Shadow of Probability in them, they had Recourſe to another Allegation, *viz.* his being a Violator of the Laws of their Nations, and guilty of Blaſphemy; which (as they were allowed to be governed by their own Law) they had a Right to demand of their Governor to ſee puniſhed, and, accordingly, did with Arrogance enough.

PILATE indeed ſinned heinouſly, in abuſing his Power, to the Condemnation of the Innocent; but *Judas* ſinned more, in delivering him up to the Chief-prieſts, and the Chief-prieſts in delivering him up to *Pilate*,

Pilate, than *Pilate* himſelf, whom they made a Tool to ſerve their Malice and Revenge. They had better Means of Knowledge than he, and ſo ſinned againſt more Light, and conſequently, their Guilt was greater, and their Condemnation heavier, than his.

THE Word *Gabatha* in the *Syriac* (for that is the Language which was then commonly ſpoken, and which the Wrtiers of the *New Teſtament* do therefore call the *Hebrew*) ſignifies an *Elevation*; and therefore the Place, where *Pilate* had his Tribunal erected, was probably a Terraſs, a Gallery, or Balcony belonging to his Palace, and paved with Stone or Marble, as the *Greek* Word *Lithoſtrotos* imports.

WASHING of Hands, with a Deſign to denote *Innocency*, was not peculiar only to the *Jews*, but cuſtomary among other Nations; becauſe by the Element of Water 'tis natural to ſignify Purity and Cleanneſs; but then the Queſtion is, Whether, in Conformity to the *Jews* or *Gentiles*, it was, that *Pilate* made uſe of this Ceremony? To expiate an unknown Murder, the Elders of the next adjacent City were wont to waſh their Hands, and ſay, *Our Hands have not ſhed this Blood*, Deut. xxi. 6, 7. and the *Pſalmiſt*, having renounced all Confederacy with wicked and miſchievous Men, makes this Reſolution, *I will waſh my Hands*, in Teſtimony of *my Innocency*, Pſal. xxvi. 6. From which Paſſages *Origen* is of Opinion, that *Pilate* did this in Compliance with the Manners of the *Jews*; and by *Actions*, as well as Words, he might declare to them the the Opinion he had of our Lord's Innocence. But, as *Pilate* was a *Roman*, others are rather inclined to think, that in this Action, he conformed himſelf to the Manners of the *Gentiles*. The *Scholiaſt* upon *Sophocles* (in *Ajace*) informs us, that it was the Cuſtom among the Ancients, when they had killed a Man, or ſhed Blood, to waſh their Hands in Water, thereby to purify them from their Defilements. Nay,

Clemens Romanus informs us, (l. ii. c. 52.) that, when Judges were going to pronounce Sentence of Death, they uſually lifted up their Hands to Heaven, thereby to denote their own Innocency; and 'tis not improbable, that they waſhed their Hands before they did ſo, that they might lift them up with the more Purity.

BUT, to proceed. *Barabbas* being thus releaſed, and *Jeſus* condemned to the Croſs, the Soldiers and Officers, after they had acted over again their former Inſults, and Indignities, took off the purple Coat, and put his own Garments on him, and having laid an heavy Croſs upon his Shoulders, led him away to his Crucifixion: But when they came to the Gate of the City, his Strength was ſo intirely exhauſted, that he was not able to ſtand under it any longer, and therefore they compelled one *Simon*, a *Cyrenian*, the Father of *Alexander* and *Rufus*, to bear it the reſt of the Way.

AMONG the vaſt Throngs, that followed to this Execution, there were may People (eſpecially ſome pious Women) who could not behold this ſad Spectacle, without the higheſt Grief and Lamentation; which, when our *Saviour* obſerved, lifting up his Face, all bloody, and disfigured, "*Weep not for me*, "ſaid he, *but weep for yourſelves, and your Children*; "for it will not be long, before thoſe ſhall be ac- "counted happy, who ſhall have no Poſterity to "inherit the Miſeries, that ſhall then come upon "this Nation: For how diſmal muſt their Condi- "tion be who ſhall call on the *Hills to cover them*, "and *the Mountains to fall on them*, that, by a ſud- "den Deſtruction they may eſcape the lingring "Calamities of Famine, and Fear, and the Horror "of a Thouſand Deaths!"

WHEN he came to the Place of Execution, which was called *Golgotha*, or Mount *Calvary*, the Soldiers, before they nailed him to the Croſs, offered him a Potion of Wine mixed with Gall, which, when

when he had taſted it, he refuſed to drink. They then ſtripped off his Cloaths; and having, with four great Nails, faſtned his Hands and his Feet, with his Body ſtretched out, to the Croſs; they ſo raiſed it up, and fixed it to the Ground. To obſcure his Innocence, and put him to the greater Shame, they crucified him between two common Malefactors; but what might be ſome Compenſation for that, was the Inſcription which *Pilate* ordered to be fixed on the Top of his Croſs, JESUS OF NAZARETH, THE KING OF THE JEWS, in the three moſt general Languages, *Hebrew*, *Greek*, and *Latin*, which the High-prieſts would gladly have had him alter: But, either out of Spite to them, who had forced him upon an unjuſt Act, or out of Honour to our Lord, whom he knew to be a righteous Perſon, he poſitively refuſed to do it.

As ſoon as our Lord was fixed on the Croſs (which was much about Noon) the four Soldiers, who were his Executioners, went to dividing the poor Spoil of his Garments. His Mantle they cut into four Parts, and took each of them one; but as for his Coat, becauſe it was one intire Piece, wove without Seam, and would therefore be ſpoiled if it were divided, for it they caſt Lots, and therein fulfilled a famous Prophecy.

WHILE he thus hung upon the Croſs in the moſt exquiſite Torments, ſeveral People of different Denominations, the Chief-prieſts, Rulers, and Soldiers, moſt of the Multitude, and almoſt every common Paſſenger, inſulted his Miſery; preſuming, that a Perſon, reduced to that low Eſtate, could never be the promiſed *Meſſiah*: But all the Reply that he made to their bitter and reviling Speeches, was only by way of Petition to his heavenly Father, that, in reſpect of their Ignorance, and confirmed Prejudice againſt him he would be pleaſed to overlook their barbarous Treatment of him, and to pardon their provoking Blaſphemies.

NAY, of the two Malefactors who were crucified with him, one of them reviled and mocked him in the ſame groſs Manner, requiring him to give the Company (as they deſired) a Demonſtration of his being the true *Meſſiah*, by reſcuing both himſelf and them from the Croſſes whereon they were fixed: But the other Malefactor reproved his Companion for inſulting the Innocent, and while himſelf was receiving the juſt Reward of his Crimes, upbraiding a Perſon who ſuffered undeſervedly; and then looking upon *Jeſus*, with a noble Reliance, and moſt wonderful Faith, he humbly intreated him to retain ſome Remembrance of him when he came into his Kingdom; to which our Lord returned him this moſt gracious Promiſe of ſpeedy Felicity, *To Day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.*

IN the mean Time, there ſtood by our Saviour's Croſs, ſad Spectators of this diſmal Tragedy, the holy *Virgin Mother*, *Mary* the wife of *Alphæus*, *Mary Magdalene*, and, *John* his beloved Apoſtle; to whoſe Care and Protection he recommended his ſorrowful Mother, and, from that Time forward, he took her to his Houſe, and, all along, paid her the Reſpect due to a Parent.

A FEW Obſervations may be here neceſſary to illuſtate the foregoing Paſſages.

IT was the Cuſtom, that he who was to be crucified ſhould bear his own Croſs to the Place of Execution: But, whereas it is generally ſuppoſed, that our Lord bore the whole Croſs, *i. e.* the long and tranſverſe Part both. This ſeems to be a Thing impoſſible; and therefore *Lipſius*, in his Treatiſe *(de Supplicio Crucis)* has ſet this Matter in a true Light, when he tells us, that *Jeſus* only carried the tranſverſe Beam, becauſe the long Piece of Timber, or Body of the Croſs, was either fixed in the Ground before, or made ready to be ſet up, as ſoon as the Priſoner came; and from hence he obſerved, that Painters are very much miſtaken in their

their Deſcription of our Saviour carrying the whole Croſs.

CRUCIFIXION was a Death, the moſt dreadful of all others, both for the Shame, and the Pain of it. So ſcandalous, that it was inflicted, as the laſt Mark of Deteſtation, upon the vileſt of People. It was the Puniſhment of Robbers, and Murderers, provided that they were *Slaves* too; but otherwiſe, if they were *free*, and had the Privileges of the City of *Rome*, this was then thought a Proſtitution of that Honour, the too infamous a Puniſhment for ſuch an one, let his Crimes have been what they would. The *Form* of a Croſs was that of two Poſts, cutting one the other at right Angles. On that which ſtood upright, the Body was faſtened, by nailing the Feet to it, and on the other tranſverſe Piece, by nailing the Hands on each Side. Now becauſe theſe Parts of the Body, being the Inſtruments of Action and Motion, and provided by Nature with a much greater Quantity of Nerves than others have Occaſion for, and becauſe all Senſation is performed by the Spirits contained in their Nerves, it will follow, that wherever they abound, the Senſe of Pain, muſt needs, in Proportion, be more quick and tender. But though the Pain of this kind of Death was exceedingly ſharp, yet, as none of the Vitals were immediately affected, the Body continued, thus ſtretched out, and hanging upon the Nails, that faſtened it to the Croſs, until Exceſs of Anguiſh had, by Degrees, quite exhauſted the Spirits, and driven out the Soul, which muſt needs make the Death, which our Saviour ſubmitted to for our Sakes, ſlow and lingering, as well as painful and ignominious: So lingering that St. *Andrew* was to two whole Days upon the Croſs, and ſome other Martyrs have been rather ſtarved, and devoured by Birds, than killed with the Torments of the Tree.

LYBIA, in its proper Acceptation, denotes thoſe Parts of the *African* Continent, which lie about the

the *Mediterranean* Sea, from *Egypt Eaſtward*, to the greater *Syrtis*, or *Gulph of Sidra*, *Weſtward*. In the *Weſtern* Part of *Lybia* ſtood *Cyrene*, a City of great Note, and once of ſuch Power, as to contend with *Carthage* for Pre-eminence: But whether this *Simon*, whom the Soldiers compelled to carry our Saviour's Croſs, was a *Jew* or *Pagan*, is a Queſtion that has been diſputed among the Ancients. Several Fathers have thought that he was a *Gentile*, and that herein he was a Type of that idolatrous People, who were afterwards to be called to the Profeſſion of the Goſpel, and to carry the Croſs after *Chriſt*. But others, from his Name, rather imagine that he was a *Jew*, and that, as there were great Numbers of that Nation in *Egypt*, and the Neighbouring Countries, this *Simon* might be one, whoſe Habitation was at *Cyrene* in *Lybia*, but was now come up to *Jeruſalem*, at the Time of the Paſſover. He is called by St. *Mark*, chap. xv. 21. the Father of *Alexander* and *Rufus*, becauſe theſe two Perſons were become famous in the *Chriſtian* Church, at the Time when this Apoſtle wrote his Goſpel; but whether he himſelf was, at this Time, a Diſciple of *Chriſt*, and afterwards Biſhop of *Boſtra* in *Arabia*, where he ſuffered Martyrdom, by being burnt alive by the *Pagans*, is much to be queſtioned, tho' ſome have aſſerted it; but not, I fear, from ſufficient Authority.

THE Saying of our Saviour to the Women, who lamented him as he went to Crucifixion, *Weep not for me, but for yourſelves, and your Children*, they undoubtedly had Occaſion to think of at the Siege of *Jeruſalem*, and during the War againſt the *Romans*, not only on Account of the Loſs of their Children, and the Sale of them who were under ſeventeen for Bond-ſlaves; but chiefly on the Account of that Famine in *Jeruſalem*, which forced *Mary*, the Daughter of *Eleazar*, a Woman of ſome Figure and Quality, to eat her own ſucking Child: Upon which (ſays *Joſephus*) *the Dread of Famine made Men weary of*

their

their Lives, and the Living envied the Dead that were taken away before the Extremity came to this Height.

THAT the Words, *they ſhall call on the Hills to cover them, and the Mountains to fall on them*, is a proverbial Expreſſion, which the Prophet *Hoſea*, chap. x. 8. makes uſe of, to denote the utter Deſpair of a People, when they ſee unavoidable Calamities coming on them, cannot be doubted; for ſo the *Targum* upon *Hoſea* explains it, "He will bring ſuch Judg-"ments upon them, as will render their Condition "as miſerable, as if the Mountains ſhould cover "them, and the Hills fall upon them." *Iſaiah* ſpeaks of the Wicked, that *they ſhall go into the Holes of the Rocks, and into the Caves of the Earth for Fear of the Lord*, chap. ii. 19. And, accordingly, *Joſephus* relates of the *Jews*, that, after the taking of *Jeruſalem*, many of them hid themſelves in Vaults, and Sepulchres, and there periſhed, rather than ſurrender to the *Romans*.

GOLGOTHA in the *Syriac* (vulgarly called the *Hebrew* Tongue) ſignifies the ſame that *Calvary* does in *Latin*, and was ſo called, either becauſe the Form of the Mount did ſomewhat reſemble a Man's Skull, or rather, becauſe it being the common Place of Execution, a great Number of dead Mens Skulls were uſually ſeen there. It is a ſmall Eminency, or Hill upon the greater Mount of *Moriah*; and, as it was anciently appropriated to the Execution of Malefactors, it was therefore ſhut out the Walls of the City, as an execrable and polluted Place; but, ſince it was made the Altar, on which was offered up the precious and all-ſufficient Sacrifice for the Sins of the whole World, it has recovered itſelf from that Infamy; and has always been reverenced, and reſorted to, by *Chriſtians*, and with ſuch Devotion, as has drawn the City round about it, ſo that it now ſtands in the midſt of *Jeruſalem*, and a great Part of the Hill of *Sion* is ſhut out of the Walls, to make Room for the Admiſſion of Mount *Calvary*; and this the rather,

rather, becauſe it was a Tradition generally received by the primitive *Chriſtians*, that the *firſt*, as well as the *ſecond Adam*, was buried here; and that this was the Place where *Abraham* was about to have offered his Son *Iſaac*, the Type of our bleſſed Lord.

INTERPRETERS, and others, vary very much about the Paſſage concerning the offering our Lord Wine mixed with Gall, taking it two different Ways, as St. *Matthew*, chap. xxvii. 34. and St. *Mark*, chap. xv. 23. ſeem to expreſs it. Some will have it, that, in St. *Matthew's* Senſe, *Vinegar mingled with Gall*, was a bitter poiſonous Draught, to ſtupify the Perſon who drunk it, that, by benumming his Senſes he might feel leſs Pain. Thoſe that differ from this, ſay, that by the Piety of ſome of his Diſciples, and not improbably of ſome of thoſe good Women who uſed to miniſter to *Jeſus*, there was prepared *Wine mingled with Myrrh*, which according to *Pliny*, among the *Levantines*, was an excellent and pleaſant Mixture, and ſuch as the Piety and Indulgence of theſe Nations uſed to adminiſter to condemned Perſons, to fortify their drooping Spirits againſt the Terrors of approaching Death. But ſtill there is a Difference between the two *Evangeliſts*, ſince the former affirms, that the Portion offered to our Saviour was *Vinegar mingled with Gall*, the latter, *Wine mingled with Myrrh*; and, to reconcile this, the eaſieſt Way is to ſay (with our Learned Dr. *Lightfoot*) that there were two Cups offered to our Lord at the Time of his Paſſion, one of *Wine mixed with Myrrh*, by ſome of his Friends, before he was nailed to the Croſs; and the other of *Vinegar*, by the Soldiers, in a ſcoffing and inſulting Manner, after he was nailed to the Croſs; which is better than to ſay, with ſome great Men, that the ancient Tranſlator of St. *Matthew* from the *Hebrew* or *Syriack*, miſtaking the Word *Marra*, which properly ſignifies *Bitterneſs*, might put *Gall* (which in *Syriac* is *Marar*, and derived from the ſame Root) inſtead of *Myrrh*.

THE

THE Malefactors here mentioned, were probably ſome of thoſe factious and ſeditious Gangs, which *Judea* at this Time was full of. Under Pretence of publick Liberty, they committed all Manner of Violence and Outrage; and, ſtirring up the People againſt the *Roman* Government, drew upon the Nation all the Calamity which afterwards befell it. As it was cuſtomary to crucify ſeveral Malefactors at the ſame Time, eſpecially if convicted of the ſame Crimes, our Saviour, who was accuſed by the *Jews* of ſeditious Practices, had two, who were really guilty of that Crime, executed with him, and they placed him in the midſt, as in the moſt honourable Place, purely in Deriſion, and with the ſame malevolent Spirit, that made them array him in a purple Robe, a Sceptre, and a Crown.

THE Inſcription which *Pilate* ordered to be fix'd on the Top of our Saviour's Croſs, was in the three moſt general Languages; in *Hebrew* or the *Syriac*, which was then the common Language of the Country; in *Greek*, which was the Language of Commerce almoſt all the *Eaſt* over; and the *Latin*, becauſe of the Majeſty of the *Roman* Empire, which, at that Time, had extended its Dominion over the then known World. The whole Inſcription, however, is ſaid to have been written after the *Jewiſh* Manner, *i. e.* from the Right hand to the Left, that it might be more legible to the *Jews*, tho', by converſing with the *Romans*, they began now to underſtand a little *Latin*.

SOME of the Fathers are of Opinion, that our Saviour's Coat, for which the four Soldiers caſt Lots, was made of two Pieces of woolen Stuff, wove in a Loom, and ſo fine-drawn, that the Joining could not be perceived. Others will have it, that it was all Needle-work, *i. e.* knit, not wove from the Top to Bottom: But *Braunius*, in his Treatiſe *de Veſtitu ſacerdotum Hebræorum*, has plainly proved, that the Ancients had the Art of weaving

any Habit, of what Make or Size ſoever, all of one Piece in a Loom; that, in ſeveral *Eaſtern* Countries the Art is ſtill preſerved, and practiſed; and that himſelf made a Machine (which *Calmet*, in his *Dictionary* under the Word *Veſtments*, has given us) wherein ſuch an Habit might be wrought. As it was cuſtomary formerly for Women to weave Stuffs and Cloath, not for their own wearing only, but for their Huſbands and Childrens Uſe (for ſo the Character of the virtuous Woman in *Solomon*, Prov. xxxi. 13. and the Practice of *Penelope*, the Wife of *Ulyſſes*, ſhew) it was an ancient Tradition, that the *bleſſed Virgin* herſelf wove her Son's Coat; but, that ſhe made it for him when he was young; that it grew with him as he increaſed in Stature; and continued always freſh, without Decay, is a mere Fiction, in order to aſſimulate it to the Habits which the *Iſraelites* wore in the Wilderneſs: Nor can it be eaſily credited, that the *holy Coat*, which is kept at the Cathedral Church at *Treves*, is the very ſame that our Saviour had on before his Crucifixion.

IF we compare *Matth.* xxvii. 44. (where it is ſaid, *that the Thieves, who were crucified with* Jeſus, *caſt the ſame in his Teeth*) with what we read in *Luke* xxiii. 29. (where 'tis ſaid, *one of the Malefactors, that was hanged, reviled on him*) we may be apt to fancy ſome Contradiction in the *Evangeliſts*: But this the Commentators reconcile, by ſhewing that it was a very common Thing in the *Hebrew* Stile, to uſe the plural Number inſtead of the ſingular: As when it is ſaid, that the Ark reſted on the Mountains of *Ararat*, Gen. viii. 4. *i. e.* on one of the Mountains, and that *God overthrew the Cities where* Lot *dwelt*, Gen. xix. 29. when he could only dwell in one at a Time; with ſeveral other Examples, both in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*. But I ſee no Reaſon why we may not underſtand this Paſſage as St. *Chryſoſtom* and St. *Jerom* have done, *viz. That both of the Thieves did, at firſt, rail on* Jeſus, *probably*

bly thinking, by that Artifice to obtain ſome Help towards procuring their Pardon; but being diſappointed of their Hopes, and hearing Jeſus *pray for his Crucifiers, one of them was thereby prevailed upon and converted:* Eſpecially ſince according to this Interpretation, the Operation of God's Grace upon this Man's Mind, were more ſudden and ſtrong, and his Converſion more miraculous.

THE Thief is called by ſome Authors, *Dimas* or *Diſmas*; and, out of a falſe Goſpel of *Nicodemus*, they produce many Fables concerning him, but too abſurd to be here related. Several of the Fathers, however, give him the Title of a Martyr, becauſe of the Teſtimony which he bore to *Chriſt*, even when he ſeemed to be utterly deſerted by every one elſe.

THE Word *Paradiſe* comes from the *Hebrew*, or rather from the *Chaldee*, *Pardes*; and, according to the Force of the Original, it ſhould properly ſignify an Orchard, or Plantation of Fruit-trees, as in ſome Paſſages of the *Old Teſtament*, particularly in *Nehem.* ii. 8. it denotes a *Foreſt*. The *Septuagint* made uſe of the Word *Paradiſos*, when they ſpeak of the *Garden of Eden*, which the Lord planted in the Beginning of the World, and therein placed our firſt Parents. The *Jews* commmonly called *Paradiſe*, *the Garden of Eden*, and they imagine that at the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, they ſhall there enjoy an earthly Felicity in the Midſt of all Sorts of Delights, and, till the Reſurrection, and the Coming of the *Meſſiah*, they think their Souls ſhall abide here in a State of Reſt. In the Books of the *New-Teſtament*, the Word *Paradiſe* is put for a Place of Delight, where the Souls of the Bleſſed enjoy everlaſting Happineſs; but where our Lord promiſes the penitent Thief, that he ſhould be with him in *Paradiſe*, it is thought by the Generality of the Fathers, that he means Heaven itſelf; though modern Commentators make no more of it, than that State of Felicity, which

God has appointed for the Reception of the Pious, until the Time of the general Reſurrection. Whether the Place of the departed Souls is above, within, or beneath the higheſt Heavens; whether there is one common Repcetacle for the Souls of the Righteous and Unrighteous till the Reſurrection; or whether, from their Departure out of Bodies, they dwell in ſeparate Manſions, (as is more probable) are Speculations we are no ways concerned to be inquiſitive about; whilſt we are ſatisfied of this main Truth, that the Righteous are in the intermediate Time, between their Death and Reſurrection, in a State of Happineſs, and the Wicked in a State of Miſery. For, as far as our Apprehenſions of theſe Matters go, a material Place can no ways contribute, either to increaſe or diminiſh the Happineſs or Miſery of an immaterial Spirit. Spirits that are diveſted of Fleſh and Blood, wherever they are, carry Heaven or Hell along with them. The good Angels are as happy here upon Earth, whilſt they are employed in the Execution of God's Will, as whilſt they are converſant in the Regions above, becauſe *they do always behold the Face of God, in whoſe Preſence is Fulneſs of Joy*; and *Satan* was no more happy, when *he came among the Sons of God to preſent themſelves before the Lord*, Job i. 6. than he was when he was *going to and fro in the Earth*. The Happineſs and Miſery of pure Spirits hath no Relation, that we know of, to the Place where they are; but the Happineſs and Miſery of pure embodied Spirits, or of Men who are made up of Souls and Bodies, have a Dependance upon the Place of their Abode; and therefore we are ſure, that wherever ſeparate Souls are lodged till the Reſurrection, after the Reſurrection, righteous and wicked Men ſhall have Places allotted to them, ſuitable to their different States; the former ſhall be carried up to the higheſt Heavens, and the latter ſhall be thrown down to the nethermoſt Hell.

THAT

THAT *Alphæus* and *Cleophas* were one and the ſame Perſon, is plain from hence,———That *James*, who is called the Son of *Mary* the Wife of *Cleophas*, is the ſame with *James* the Son of *Alphæus*; as indeed, in the *Hebrew* Tongue, *Alphæus* and *Cleophas* differ only in the Manner in which the *Greeks* have written, or pronounced theſe two Names. It is thought that ſhe was the Siſter of the Holy Virgin, and the Mother of *James the Leſs*, of *Joſes*, of *Simon*, and of *Judas*, who in the Goſpel are called the Brethren of our Lord, *i. e.* his Couſin-germans. When or where ſhe died, is a Matter of much Uncertainty: But the *Greeks* kept the eighth of *April* in Memory of the holy Woman, who brought Perfumes to embalm the Body of *Chriſt*, and pretend, at this Time, to have her Body at *Conſtantinople*, in the Church of the Holy Virgin, built by *Juſtin* II. though others talk of the Tranſlation of her Body, in particular, into the City of *Veroli*, near *Rome*; while others again pretend, that it is in a little City of *Provence*, called the *three Marys*, on the Banks of the *Rhone*, and of the Sea. All Fictions equally credible!

THE Generality of Commentators do infer from our Lord's recommending his Mother to his beloved Diſciple, that her Huſband *Joſeph* was at that Time dead; and therefore our Lord took Care that ſhe ſhould not be deſtitute, charging his beloved Diſciple to treat her as his Mother; and he accordingly not only received her into his own Houſe, as long as he continued in *Paleſtine*, but, when he removed to *Epheſus*, took her along with him, where (according to the Account of the Fathers of the Council held there) ſhe is ſaid to have died, and been buried in a very old Age. Others, however, maintain, that ſhe died and was buried at *Jeruſalem*; and they farther add, that the Apoſtles being diſperſed in different Parts of the World to labour in the Preaching of the Goſpel, all on a ſudden, were miraculouſly

miraculouſly tranſported to *Jeruſalem*, that they might be preſent at the Deceaſe of the bleſſed Virgin; that after her Death, they buried her in the Valley of *Gethſemane*, where, for three whole Days, were heard Concerts of heavenly Singers; and that, at the End of the three Days, when the Concert ceaſed, and St. *Thomas*, who had not been preſent at the Burial, was deſirous to ſee her Corpſe, they opened her Tomb again; but not finding the Body there, they thence concluded, that God had been pleaſed to honour it with Immortality, by a Reſurrection previous to that of other Men. But theſe are Traditions that (to ſpeak the ſofteſt Thing of them) deſerve no Regard at all.

BUT to return to our Hiſtory.

DURING theſe melancholy Tranſactions, the whole Frame of Nature began to be changed: The Sun withdrew its Light; the Stars appeared; and the Eclipſe was the more remarkable, becauſe the Moon, at that Time, was not in Conjunction. This Eclipſe began about twelve, and laſted till three in the Afternoon; when all Things were full of Horror and Amazement. Men's Hearts began to relent, and inſtead of their former Inſults, they ſtood in ſilent Expectance of what would be the Iſſue. All this while our Bleſſed Lord continued meek and ſilent, tho' languiſhing and waſting under the Agonies which his Body endured, and the heavy Load of the divine Indignation againſt Sin; till, in the Words of the *Pſalmiſt*, he complained at laſt, *Eli! Eli! Lamaſabacthani*, i. e. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

ONE of the Soldiers hearing the Word *Eli* or *Elohi*, out of Ignorance of the *Hebrew* Tongue, thought that he called for *Elias* to help him in his Diſtreſs; and thereupon dipping a Spunge in Vinegar, put it on a Reed, which St. *John* calls a Stalk of Hyſſop, and (as he complained of being thirſty) gave it him to drink. Others, however were for letting

it

it alone, to ſee whether *Elias* would come and help him, but when he had taſted the Vinegar, and now knew that all the Types and Prophecies concerning him were fulfilled, his Father's Wrath appeaſed, and the great Work of Man's Redemption accompliſhed, he ſaid, *It is finiſhed*, and then, *bowing down his Head*, he recommended his Soul into his Father's Hands, and ſo *gave up the Ghoſt*.

UPON his Expiration there immediately happened a terrible Earthquake, which rent the Vail of the Temple from Top to Bottom, and ſplit the Rocks, and opened the Graves and Tombs, ſo that the Bodies of ſeveral who were dead, aroſe and went into *Jeruſalem*, where they were ſeen and known by many. Theſe Prodigies which attended our Lord's Death, ſtruck the Spectators with ſuch Amazement, that, as they returned home, they ſmote their Breaſts, and with great Lamentation, declared that the Perſon who had ſuffered that Day, was innocent. Nay the very Centurion, and other Soldiers, who attended the Execution, from the Conviction of what they had ſeen, were not afraid to affirm, that he certainly was the Son of God.

THE Day whereon our Saviour ſuffered, was the Eve, or Preparative to the Paſchal Feſtival, which, that Year, was on the *Jewiſh* Sabbath-Day, and ſo was a Feaſt and Sabbath together. That therefore ſo great and ſolemn a Day might not be profaned by the Suſpenſion of the Bodies on the Croſs, the Rulers of the *Jews* came, and requeſted of *Pilate*, that their Legs might be broken to haſten their Deaths, and their Bodies taken down; which accordingly was executed upon the two Thieves: But, when the Soldiers came to *Jeſus*, and found him already dead, inſtead of breaking his Legs, one of them pierced his Side with a Spear, from which iſſued out a great Quantity of Blood and Water.

AMONG the Diſciples of our Lord, there was one named *Joſeph*, a Man of great Wealth and Honour, born

born at *Arimathæa*, and, not improbably, one of the Council of the grand *Sanhedrim*, but who ſtood in ſome Fear of them, while our Saviour was alive. After his Death, however, he took Courage, and going to *Pilate*, begged Leave of him to take down the Body of *Jeſus*, and bury it. The Governor was ſurprized to hear that he was dead ſo ſoon; but being informed by the Centurion, that it actually was ſo, he ordered the Body to be delivered to *Joſeph*, who, for the preſent, wrapped it up in fine Linnen Cloaths, which he had provided for that Purpoſe; and, at the ſame Time, *Nicodemus* (another private Diſciple of our Lord's) brought a Mixture of Myrrh and Aloes, with other Spices and Perfumes, to embalm his Body, according to the Manner of the *Jews*.

AGAIN let us review the foregoing Paſſages,

ELI! Eli! Lamaſabacthani; *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?* Theſe Words are taken from the twenty ſecond *Pſalm*, which is allowed, by all Commentators, to relate to the *Meſſiah*; for which Reaſon our Saviour made uſe of them, rather than any other, to evidence his Title to that Character. Now, in the *Hebrew* Way of ſpeaking, 'tis certain that God is ſaid to leave or forſake any Perſon, when he ſuffers him to fall into great Calamities, and lie under great Misfortunes, and does not help him out of them. To this purpoſe *Zion*, having been long afflicted, is brought in by the Prophet, complaining *the Lord hath forſaken me, the Lord hath forgotten me*, Chap. xlix. 14. And as the royal *Pſalmiſt* is very frequent in ſuch Complaints, ſo he explains the Senſe of them, when he addreſſes himſelf to God, *Why art thou ſo far from my Prayer*, ſo that, tho' *I cry in the Day-time, thou heareſt not?* Pſal. xxii. 1, 2. That *David* was not fallen into any Deſpondency, is manifeſt from his calling unto God ſo fiduciarly his God; and that our Bleſſed Saviour was not (as ſome think) under any Failure of his Truſt in God, or any

Perturbation

Perturbation of Spirit from the Senſe of divine Wrath, is evident from his ſaying of his ſuffering Condition, *it is finiſhed*, and from the very Words, wherein he breathed his laſt, *Father, into thy Hands I commit my Spirit.*

THE Vinegar and Spunge, in Executions of condemned Perſons, were ſet ready to ſtop the too violent Flux of Blood, that the Malefactor might be the longer in dying, but to the bleſſed *Jeſus* they were exhibited with Scorn; for being mingled with Gall, the Mixture was more horrid and unpleaſant.

IT may be pretended, perhaps, that a Branch of Hyſſop, might not be long enough to reach our Saviour's Mouth, as he was hanging upon the Croſs; but, beſides that, Croſſes were not, in ſome Places, erected ſo high, but that Beaſts of Prey could reach the Bodies, that were faſtened to them; and Hyſſop, in theſe Countries, as well as Muſtard-Seed, was of a much longer Growth than it is with us; I cannot ſee, why the Perſon, that offered our Saviour this Vinegar, might not make uſe of a Ladder, if the Croſs was ſo high that he could not fairly reach him: Nor is the Difference in St. *Matthew*'s calling it a Reed, which St. *John* calls Hyſſop, of any Manner of Moment; becauſe the *Greek* Word is put to ſignify a Stalk, Shoot, or Branch; ſo that St. *Matthew* ſpeaks of that in general, which St. *John* ſpecifies in particular.

THERE was a Tradition among the *Jews*, that it was *Elias*'s proper Office to come and ſuccour ſuch as were in Miſery: And, accordingly, ſome of the *Jews*, either deceived with the Reſemblance of the Words, thought that our Lord called *Elias* to his Help; or elſe giving a malicious Turn to the Senſe of the Words, which they well enough underſtood, they inſulted him, for his calling in vain *Elias* to his Help.

THE original Phraſe may denote a delivering up, or (as our Saviour expreſſes it, *Luke* xxiii.

46.) a *committing his Spirit into the Hands of God*, as a ſacred Truſt to be reſtored again, and united to his Body, at the Time prefixed by his own infinite Wiſdom; and plainly implies ſuch a Diſſolution, and actual Separation of Soul and Body, as every common Man undergoes, when he dies: But herein is a remarkable Difference, that what is in other Men the Effect of Neceſſity, was in *Jeſus* a voluntary Act, and the Effect of his own free Choice. Hence the Generality of Interpreters have thought, that St. *John* takes Notice that *Chriſt* bowed his Head, before he gave up the Ghoſt; whereas, in common Caſes, the falling of the Head follows after the Breath's going out of his Body: And hence alſo St. *Mark* obſerves, that *Jeſus*'s crying out with ſo loud and ſtrong Voice, immediately before his expiring, was one Reaſon that moved the Centurion to think him an extraordinary Perſon; for this ſhewed that it was not the Exceſs of Pain and Sorrow, that had tired out Nature and haſtened his Death, but that he, who (as himſelf profeſſes, *John* x. 18.) *had Power to lay down his Life*, and could not have it taken from him, without his own Permiſſion and Conſent, did freely and voluntarily lay it down, at ſuch a Time, as himſelf ſaw convenient.

SOME are of Opinion, that the Earthquake at the Death of our Saviour, was the ſame that happened in the Reign of *Tiberius Cæſar*, and was the greateſt that ever was known in the Memory of Man. Both *Pliny* and *Macrobius* makes mention of it; and the latter informs us, that it deſtroyed no leſs than twelve Cities in *Aſia*: But, by the ſacred Text it appears, that the Earthquake, here mentioned, affected only the Temple of *Jeruſalem*, and the Parts which are ſpecified, the Vail, the Ground, the Rocks, the Tombs, *&c.* Nor does it ſeem improbable, that this Prodigy was ſhewn particularly in that Place, to foretel the Deſtruction of the Temple,

ple, and its Service, upon the People's ſad Impiety in crucifying the Lord of Life.

IN the ſecond Temple, between the *Holy Place*, and the *Moſt Holy* (ſays *Maimonides*) there was no Partition-wall, though in the firſt Temple there was one, built of the Thickneſs of a Cubit. The Diviſion between them was made by two Vails, one from the Extremity of the *Holy Place*, and the other from the Extremity of the *Moſt Holy*, with a void Space of a Cubit between. The like Form of Separation was obſerved in the Temple which *Herod* rebuilt, as *Joſephus* informs us; and therefore it muſt be a Miſtake in thoſe, who think that this Vail was a Partition-wall of Stones. Whether of the two Vails, that which belonged to the *Holy Place*, or that which hung in the *Moſt Holy*, was, at this Time, rent in twain, is a Queſtion among the Antients, though the Words of the Author to the *Hebrews*, where he tells us, that *Chriſt*, as our High-prieſt, *has conſecrated for us a new Way through the Vail*, ſo that we may with *Boldneſs enter into the holieſt by the Blood of* Jeſus, *Heb.* x. 19, *&c.* ſeems to be a pretty clear Determination of it.

IN the Church of the Sepulchre (which ſtands on *Mount Calvary*) is ſtill to be ſeen that memorable Cleft of the Rock, occaſioned, as it is ſaid, by the Earthquake which happened at our Lord's Crucifixion. This Cleft (as to what now appears of it) is about a Span wide at its upper Part, and two deep. After this it cloſes: But then it opens again below, and runs down to an unknown Depth of Earth. That this Rent was made by the Earthquake, which happened at our Lord's Paſſion, there is only Tradition to prove: But that it is a natural and genuine Breach, and not counterfeited by any Art, the Senſe and Reaſon of every one, that ſees it may convince him; for the Sides of it fit like two Tallies to each other, and yet it runs in ſuch intricate Windings, as could not be

well counterfeited by Art, or performed by any Inſtrument.

SINCE St. *Paul* ſtiles our Saviour *the Firſt-Born from the Dead*, Coloſſ. i. 18. and *the Fruits of them that ſlept*, 1 Cor. xv. 20. moſt Commentators are of Opinion, though ſeveral Tombs were opened, as ſoon as our Saviour expired, yet none of the Saints aroſe, until he returned from the Grave: But then, who the Saints were, it is no eaſy Matter to conjucture. Some think, that the *Man after God's own Heart*, King *David*, or ſome of the ancient Patriarchs, might beſt deſerve this Pre-eminence: But on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, St. *Peter* tells the *Jews* plainly, that the Body of *David* was ſtill in its Sepulchre, and not *aſcended into Heaven*, Acts ii. 29, 34. and St. *Paul*, in his Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, tells us of the Patriarchs, that *they had not received the Promiſe, God having deſigned, that they, without us, ſhould not be made perfect*, Heb. xi. 39, 40. The moſt probable Conjecture therefore, is, that they were ſome of thoſe who belived in *Jeſus* (as old *Simeon* did) and died a little after his Crucifixion; becauſe, of theſe it is ſaid, that they *went into the Holy City and appeared to many*, and ſo, very probably were well known to thoſe, to whom they appeared, as having been their Contemporaries.

THE Centurion who attended at *Chriſt*'s Crucifixion, according to ſome, was named *Longinus*; and the Tradition is,—--That, upon his Converſion to the Chriſtian Faith, being expelled from the *Roman* Army wherein he ſerved, he returned to *Cappadocia*, where he began to preach *Jeſus Chriſt*, but was there beheaded, and his Head carried to *Pilate*. But all this ſeems to be a Fable, for which there is no Foundation in Hiſtory.

THAT *the Son of God* did not always ſignify one, who was ſo by an eternal Generation, but only one that was his beloved and adopted Son, is apparent from hence, that what is here called *the Son of God*,

is,

is, in St. *Luke* xxiii. 47. ſaid to be a juſt Man. For though the *Jews* very well knew, from the ſecond Pſalm, that their *Meſſiah* was to be the *Son of God*; yet that they did not know him to be ſo, in the higher Senſe of the Word, ſeems to be evident, becauſe they did not know how *David* could call *him Lord*, Matt. xvii. 16.

THE *Jews* had a ſtrict Injunction in their Law, that the dead Bodies of thoſe, who were executed, ſhould not hang all Night, but by all Means be buried that Day, *Deut.* xxi. 22, 23. but the *Romans* uſed to do otherwiſe. They ſuffered the Bodies to hang upon the Croſs always until they were dead; and in ſome Caſes, a conſiderable Time longer. On this Occaſion it ſeems, as if the *Jews* had left the *Romans* to follow their own Cuſtom, in Relation to the crucified Perſons, and were in no Concern to have them taken down, had it not been for the near Approach of their Paſſover, whoſe Joy and Feſtivity, they thought might be damp'd by ſo melancholy a Sight. Upon this Account they petition *Pilate* to have them removed: And the Reaſon why *Pilate* might be rather induced to grant their Requeſt, was, that the *Romans* themſelves had ſuch Reſpect for the Feaſts of their Emperors, that on thoſe Days they always took down the Bodies from the Croſs, and gave them to their Relations.

THE Prophecy, which foretold, *that a Bone of him ſhould not be broken*, is uſually referred to the Command concerning the Paſchal Lamb, *Thou ſhalt not break a Bone of it*, Exod. xii. 46. But, as *David* was likewiſe a Type of *Chriſt*, we cannot ſee, why it may not refer to theſe Words of his, *He keepeth all his Bones, ſo that none of them is broken*, Pſal. xxxiv. 19. or why the Promiſe, which reſpects all righteous Perſons, might not more particularly be fulfilled in the juſt one.

THE Man who pierced his Side with a Spear, was not one of the Horſe (as uſually is painted) but

but of the Foot Soldiers; becauſe a Spear, or ſhort Pike, was not Part of the Armour belonging to the *Roman* Infantry; and the Reaſon why this was done, was, not only that a Prediction concerning him might be fulfilled, (*Zach.* xii. 10, 12. which the *Jews* apply to the *Meſſiah*) but that his Death might be put beyond all Diſpute, which, had it been doubtful, muſt have made his Reſurrection (which is the greateſt Aſſurance we have of our own Reſurrection, and Glory with him) remain doubtful likewiſe.

Sr. *John* the *Evangeliſt*, who was an Eye-witneſs of this Paſſage, affirms it in a particular Manner, Chap. xix. 35. and in the firſt Epiſtle, Chap. v. 6. makes it a Matter of great Moment, when he tells us, *This is he that came by Water and by Blood; not by Water only, but by Water and Blood.* The Force of whoſe Reaſoning (according to the learned *Hammond*) is this,——*That, as Water was the Emblem of our Saviour's Purity, and Blood the Evidence of his Fortitude and Patience, and both of thoſe proceeded from his Side, they jointly evince the Neceſſity of ſuch Purity and Patience, in every one that believes aright in* Chriſt. The *Jewiſh* Doctors have a Tradition, (as Dr. *Lightfoot* acquaints us) that when *Moſes* ſmote the Rock, there firſt came forth Blood, and then Water. Whether the Apoſtle might have reſpect to that Tradition when he calls *Chriſt* that Rock, 1 *Cor.* x. 4. is uncertain; but among the many other important Deſigns of this Water and Blood, the Antients have well obſerved, that, by a ſpecial Act of God's Providence, there flowed at this Time, from our Saviour's Side, the two Sacraments of his Church, *Baptiſm* and the *Supper of the Lord.* As to the natural Reaſon of this Flux of Water and Blood from our Lord's Body, *Anatomiſts* tell us, that there is a *Capſula*, near the Heart, called the *Pericardium*, which hath Water in it, of continual Uſe to cool the Heart; and that the coming out of Water here with the Blood, was a ſure

Evidence

Evidence of the wonnding his very Heart, and conſequently of the Certainty of his Death.

THE Riches and honourable Station of *Joſeph*, are mentioned, not out of any Vanity and Oſtentation, that a Perſon of ſo conſiderable a Figure ſhould pay Reſpect to the Body of our bleſſed Lord; but chiefly to ſhew how ſtrangely God brought about an ancient Prophecy concerning the *Meſſiah*, *viz.* that, notwithſtanding the infamous Manner of his dying, he ſhould *make his Grave with the Rich, at his Death*, Iſai. liii. 9. which in itſelf, was a moſt unlikely Thing; not only becauſe the Bodies of them, that were crucified, did, by the *Roman* Laws, hang upon the Gibbet, ſometimes until they were conſumed; but becauſe the *Jews*, though they did not allow of this Severity to the Dead, did nevertheleſs always bury their Malefactors in ſome publick neglected, and ignominious Place; and ſo, in all Probability, muſt our Saviour have been treated, had not *Joſeph* applied himſelf to the Governor, in whoſe Diſpoſal the Bodies of executed Perſons were.

RAMATHA (from whence *Arimathæa* is formed) ſignifies *Height*. It is placed by St. *Jerom* between *Lydda* and *Joppa*; but modern Travellers ſpeak of it as lying between *Joppa* and *Jeruſalem*, and ſituated on a Mountain though very different from *Ramathaim-Zophim*, the Place where *Samuel* was born, and which lay to the *North*, whereas *Arimathæa* was to the *Weſt* of *Jeruſalem*.

IT may well ſeem ſtrange, that *Joſeph*, who never durſt openly profeſs a Regard to *Jeſus*, while living, ſhould now, when he had ſuffered all the Ignominy of a Malefactor, not to ſtick to intereſt himſelf for his honourable Interment. But, beſides, that this might be an Inſtance of the Efficacy of thoſe Impreſſions, which God makes upon Men's Minds, even at the moſt unlikely Seaſons of prevailing; the Deſire which *Pilate* had expreſſed, to ſave our Lord's

Lord's Life, and avowed Unwillingneſs to condemn him, together with the Prodigies that had accompanied his Crucifixion, and made now every Heart relent, might be Motive enough for him to go in boldly to *Pilate*, (as St. *Mark* expreſſes it) and beg the Body of him, before it was taken from the Croſs. According to the *Miſhna*, the neareſt Relations of thoſe that ſuffered as Criminals, were not permitted to put their Bodies into their Family Tombs, until their Fleſh was all conſumed in the publick Sepulchres; and this might poſſibly be the Reaſon why *Joſeph* made ſuch Haſte with his Requeſt to the Governor, *viz.* that he might prevent our Lord from being caſt into one of the publick Charnel-houſes, appointed for the Reception of Malefactors Bodies.

THE *Nicodemus* above mentioned, is the ſame Ruler of the *Jews*, and Maſter of *Iſrael*, as the *Evangeliſts* calls him, *John* iii. 1, 10. who, at our Lord's firſt coming to *Jeruſalem*, after he had entered upon his Miniſtry, held a private Conference with him, and for ever after was his Diſciple, though he made no open Profeſſion of it 'till after his Paſſion. Whether it was before or after this Time, that he received Baptiſm from ſome of *Chriſt*'s Diſciples, is a Thing uncertain; but there is Reaſon to believe, that the *Jews*, when they came to be informed of it, depoſed him from the Dignity of a Senator, excommunicated him, and drove him out of *Jeruſalem*. Nay, it is farther ſaid, that they would have put him to death, but that, in Conſideration to *Gamaliel*, who was his Uncle, or Couſin-german, they contented themſelves with beating him almoſt to death, and plundering his Goods. 'Tis added likewiſe, that *Gamaliel* conveyed him to his Country-houſe, where he provided himſelf with Things neceſſary for his Support, and when he died, buried him honurably by St. *Stephen*.

BUT to go on with our Narration:

NOT far from the Place of Execution, there was a Garden

a Garden belonging to *Joſeph*, where he had lately hewn out of a Rock, a Sepulchre for his own proper Interment. Having therefore embalmed our Saviour's Body, and wound it up in the Linnen Cloaths, here they buried him, and with a large Stone cut out of the Rock for that Purpoſe, cloſed the Mouth of the Sepulchre: But *Mary Magdalen*, and the other Woman, who were preſent at his Death, and aſſiſted at his Burial, having taken good Notice of the Place where he was laid, went, and prepared freſh Spices for his farther Embalment, as ſoon as the Sabbath-day was over.

ON the Sabbath-day the Rulers of the *Jews* came to *Pilate*, and informed him, *That our Lord (whom they called an Impoſtor) having, in his Life-Time, made it his Boaſt, that on the third Day, he would riſe again from the Dead, they therefore requeſted of him, that he ſhould order the Sepulchre to be kept under a ſtrong Guard, until that Day was paſſed, leſt his Diſciples ſhould ſteal him away by Night, and then give it out, that he was riſen from the Dead; which might prove a more dangerous Seduction to the People, than any Thing they had yet fallen into.* Whereupon he gave them Leave to have a Detachment of the Guard of the Temple, and to poſt them near the Sepulchre; which accordingly they did; and to ſecure it againſt all private Attempts, ſet a Seal on the Stone that was at the Mouth of it.

EARLY next Morning, even as the Sun was riſing, *Mary Magdalen*, and the other Woman, who, on *Friday* Evening had prepared Spices and Perfumes, went to the Sepulchre, to embalm again our Saviour's Body; being ignorant of the Guard that was placed there. Their whole Care and Conſultation, in the Way, was how they might get the Stone, that was at the Entrance, removed. But, before they arrived at the Place, an Angel from Heaven had rolled it away, and ſat upon it; at the Sight of whom (for his Countenance was like Lightning)

and the Noiſe of the Earthquake, which accompanied his Appearance, the Guards fell down, like ſo many dead Men; ſo the Women had free Entrance into the Sepulchre, but were not a little aſtoniſhed to ſee the Body gone, and an Angel, in a refulgent Habit, ſitting in the Place, where it laid. Frightened at this Apparition, they made all the Haſte they could, out of the Sepulchre, but were met by another Angel, in the like glorious Apparel, who not only acquainted them with our Lord's Reſurrection, according to what he had foretold his Diſciples; but, to give them a fuller Conviction, reconducted them into the Sepulchre; ſhewed them that the Place where he laid was empty; and ordered them to go immediately, and carry the Apoſtles (but more eſpecially *Peter*) the News thereof. The Women accordingly, filled with Fear, and Joy, and Wonder altogether, haſtened to find out the Apoſtles, to whom they related what they had heard and ſeen; but, inſtead of believing them, they looked upon this, as no more than the Product of a weak and frightened Imagination.

OUT of Curioſity, however, *Peter* and *John* ran to the Sepulchre, and found the Thing true according to the Women's Report; the Body gone; the burying Cloaths lying on the Ground; and the Napkin, that was about his Head, very carefully folded, and laid by itſelf. Notwithſtanding this, ſuch was their Incredulity, that they returned home, never ſuppoſing any Thing elſe, but that ſome body had taken him away. *Mary Magdalen*, who, by this Time, was again returned to the Sepulchre, ſtayed behind the two Apoſtles weeping; and, as ſhe ſtooped down to look in, ſaw two Angels in bright Apparel, ſitting where the Body had lain, one at the Head, and the other at the Feet, As the Angels were enquiring of her the Occaſion of her Tears, and ſhe telling them, that it was the Loſs of her Lord's Body, ſhe happened to turn herſelf

ſelf round, and ſaw *Jeſus* himſelf; but, ſuppoſing him to be the Maſter of the Garden (where the Sepulchre was) ſhe deſired of him, that if he had removed the Body any where, he would be ſo kind as to let her know, that ſhe might take Care of it. Hereupon our Lord calling her by her Name, ſhe immediately knew him, and throwing herſelf at his Feet, was going to embrace him; but he forbad her, upon Account, that he had not, as yet, aſcended to his Father, and only required her to acquaint his Apoſtles with his Reſurrection, and immediate Aſcenſion into Heaven; which ſhe failed not to do, but ſtill they gave no Credit to her Report.

IN the mean Time, ſome of the Guards, in a great Fright, fled into the City, and related all that had occurred, to the Chief-prieſts and Rulers, who immediately aſſembled themſelves to conſult upon this important Affair, and came at length to this Reſolution, *viz. To bribe the Soldiers with a large Sum of Money, and thereby engage them to give it out, among the People, that while themſelves were aſleep, the Diſciples of* Jeſus *came, and ſtole him away; promiſing them withal, that in Caſe this their pretended Neglect ſhould come to the Governor's Ears, they would take Care to pacify him.* The Soldiers accordingly took the Money, and obeyed their Orders; And this Report was current among the *Jews* for many Years after.

HERE let us review what we have now been relating.

THIS Garden has been long ſince converted into a Church, called *the Church of the Sepulchre*, as being built over the Place, where our Lord's Sepulchre was. To fit this Place for the Structure of a Church, the firſt Founders were obliged to reduce it to a plain Area, which they did by cutting down ſeveral Parts of the Rock, and by raiſing up others: But, in this Work, Care was taken, that none of thoſe

Parts of the Place, which were more immediately concerned in our Lord's Paſſion, ſhould be either altered or diminiſhed; inſomuch that the Part of it, where *Chriſt* is ſaid to have been faſtened to, and lifted upon the Croſs, is left entire, ſtanding at this Day, eighteen Steps above the common Floor of the Church, and the holy Sepulchre itſelf, which was at firſt a Cave hewn into a Rock under Ground, having had the Rock cut away with it all round, is now, as it were, a Grotto above Ground.

THERE are ſeveral Circumſtances in the Deſcription of our Saviour's Tomb, which contribute very greatly to the Confirmation of the Truth of his Reſurrection. As Firſt, the Place of his Interment was near adjoining to the City, that thereby the Miracle of his Reſurrection might be better known to all the *Jews*, and his own Apoſtles more eſpecially. Secondly, His Tomb was a new one, wherein never Man before was laid, and therefore, when his Body left this Sepulchre empty, no Suſpicion could remain of its being any other Body than that which *Joſeph* had taken down from the Croſs, and diſpoſed of in that Place. Thirdly, It was hewn out of a Rock, incapable of being undermined, or dug through, and therefore there was no poſſible Way for the Perſon depoſited in a Place ſo contrived, to get out again, except only at the Mouth or Door of the Cave. And yet, Fourthly, A large Stone, which (according to Mr. *Maundrel*, who ſaw it) is two Yards and a Quarter long, one broad, and one thick, cloſed up the Entrance of it; all which was watched by a ſtrong Guard of ſixty Soldiers: So that, as the Centry would not ſuffer the Body to be conveyed out by this Way, the Nature of the Place would not allow it by any other; therefore, had not our Lord been more than Man, he could never have forced his Paſſage out. Of ſuch mighty Significance is it to us, that ſo punctual a Deſcription is given the World of our Bleſſed Lord's Burial, and all the

Circumſtances

Circumſtances relating to it, ſince they all contribute great Strength to theſe two moſt important Articles of the *Chriſtian* Faith, the Death and Reſurrection of *Jeſus*.

THIS Sepulchre of *Joſeph*'s, which fell to our Lord's Share (according to the Deſcription of thoſe that have lately ſeen it) is a Kind of ſmall Chamber, almoſt ſquare within; whoſe Height, from Bottom to Top, is eight Feet and an Inch; its Length ſix Feet and an Inch; and its Breadth, fifteen Feet and ten Inches; its Entrance, which looks towards the *Eaſt*, is but four feet high, and two feet ten Inches wide. The Place within, where our Lord's Body was laid, takes up a whole Side of the Cave. It is a Stone raiſed from the Ground to the Height of two Feet eleven Inches; whoſe Length is five Feet eleven Inches; and its Breadth two Feet eight Inches, placed length-wiſe from *Eaſt* to *Weſt*. The Stone is ſtill remaining, even to this Day; but the particular Parts of it are not viſible, it being incruſted over with white Marble.

'TIS generally ſuppoſed, that this Guard of the Temple was a large Detachment of *Roman* Soldiers; who, in the Time of the Feaſt, kept Centry at the Gates of the Temple, to prevent ſuch Diſorders as might very well happen among ſuch a large Concourſe of People: For, by the Sequel of their Story it appears, *Matth.* xxviii. 19. that they depended upon *Pilate*, were ſubject to his Correction, and conſequently were not *Levites*, (as ſome imagine) but *Roman* Soldiers.

WHEN *Daniel* was caſt into the Lions Den, it is ſaid, *That the King ſealed the Stone that was laid upon the Mouth of it, with his own Signet, and with the Signet of his Lords, that the Purpoſe might not be changed concerning* Daniel, Chap. vi. 17. and from hence, ſome have ſuppoſed, that the Stone, wherewith our Lord's Sepulchre was cloſed, was ſealed with *Pilate*'s Signet,

Signet, becauſe it was a Matter of publick Concern, and others have fancied; that it was farther ſecured by a great Chain, that went acroſs it, and that the Marks thereof were viſible in the venerable *Bede*'s Time.

THE ſeeming Oppoſition between what is recorded in the xvith Chapter of *Mark*'s Goſpel, concerning ſome Circumſtances that happened at our Lord's Sepulchre, and the Narrations of the other *Evangeliſts*, made ſome of the Antients (as St. *Jerom* informs us) call in queſtion its Authority. But, as this Chapter was owned in the Times of *Irenæus*, and is quoted in the apoſtolick Conſtitutions, a ſmall Matter of diſtinguiſhing, added to what Dr. *Whitby* has done, by way of *Appendix* to it, will be a Means ſufficient to reconcile them. As to the Differenee between the Account in St. *Luke*, who mentions the Viſion of Angels to *Mary Magdalen*, before her going to *Peter*, and that in St. *John*, who makes it ſubſequent to it; our learned *Hammond* is of Opinion, that this and ſeveral other Inconſiſtences may be adjuſted by this one Conſideration, That St. *Luke* writing from Notes, which he had collected from Eye-witneſſes, and not from his own Knowledge, obſerves not ſo exactly the Order of Time, wherein Things were done and ſpoken, but oftentimes in another Method, puts together Things of Affinity to one another, though not done or ſaid at the ſame Time. For ſo in Relation to the Tranſactions at our Lord's Sepulchre, he firſt ſets down all that concerns the Women together, and then that which concerns *Peter*; though Part of that, which concerned the Women, was done after what is mentioned of St. *Peter*: For the punctual Obſervation of Order (ſays our *Annotator*) is not neceſſary when Things themſelves are truly recited. The right Order of the Story he therefore ſuppoſes is this,——Mary *and the other Woman came to the Sepulchre, but found, that before their Coming, an Angel,*

gel, with an Earthquake, had rolled away the Stone, and that the Body was gone. Upon this Mary *returns to* Peter *and* John; *tells them what ſhe had ſeen; and they, to ſatisfy themſelves of the Truth of her Report, haſten to the Sepulchre; and having found Things juſt as ſhe told them, went away again. In the mean Time, the Women ſtay at the Sepulchre, wondering at this ſtrange Event; and then follows the Viſion of Angels, ſitting upon the Stone, and within the Sepulchre, ſpeaking to the Women, and aſſuring them of the Reality of* Chriſt's *Reſurrection; upon which they depart the ſecond Time, to tell the Apoſtles the News.*

PETER is here named, not as the Prince of the Apoſtles, but (as the Fathers ſay) for his Conſolation, and to take off the Scruple, which might lie upon his Spirits, whether, after his threefold Denial of his Maſter (with ſuch horrid Aggravations attending it) he had not forfeited his Right to be one of our Lord's Diſciples.

THE Cuſtom of Interment among the *Jews* was, to roll the dead Body (as we read our Saviour's was, *John* xix. 39, 40.) up in Spices, which, tho' they preſerved it, in ſome Meaſure, from Corruption, by their glewy Nature, could not but make the Cloaths that were uſed with them, cling ſo cloſe to the Skin, as not to be drawn off without a great deal of Time and Difficulty. When therefore theſe Coverings were found regularly pulled off, wrapped up, and laid by; this plainly ſhews, that the Diſciples could have no Hand in ſtealing away their Maſter's Body. For, do Thieves, after they have rifled an Houſe, uſe to ſpend Time in putting Things in Order again? Or can it enter into any ſober Man's Thoughts, that they, who came by Stealth, and in Danger of their Lives (as the Diſciples certainly muſt have done upon ſuch an Adventure) ſhould thus ſtay, to awaken the Guard, and trifle away their Time, in ſuch hazardous and unneceſſary Niceties. Had they been really engaged in this Affair, they certainly would have

have taken away the Body at once, without tarrying to unbind and undreſs it. And therefore the Condition, in which the Sepulchre was found, to every conſiderate Man, muſt be a ſufficient Confutation of that idle Pretence of the *Jews*, *His Diſciples came and ſtole him away.*

VARIOUS are the Senſes which Interpreters have been pleaſed to affix to the Reaſon, which our Lord aſſigns, for his rejecting this Woman's Homage and Embraces, *I am not yet aſcended to my Father.* Some imagine that *Mary* ſtill retaining her Notions of a temporal Kingdom, concluded that our Lord was now riſen, on purpoſe to aſſume it, and therefore fell down to adore him; but that he, willing to raiſe her Mind to ſpiritual and celeſtial Thoughts, gave her to underſtand, that, as yet it was not a proper Time for her to make her Addreſſes to him; becauſe he was not yet aſcended into Heaven, from whence he was to adminiſter his Kingdom, and to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt, in order to form a ſpiritual Communion between himſelf and his true Diſciples. Others ſuppoſe that the Woman imagined, that our Lord was riſen again, in the Manner that *Lazarus* did, *viz.* to live upon Earth, as he had done before; and that therefore, to convince her of the contrary, he bid her not touch him, as a mortal Man, becauſe *I am not yet aſcended into Heaven*, but, in a ſhort Time ſhall; and that is the Place where you are to pay me your Homage and Adoration. Others again ſay, that by a Figure, common enough among Grammarians, who frequently change one Tenſe for another, our Saviour's Words may denote, that he was not then about to aſcend, but to ſtay many Days upon Earth; ſo that *Mary* might have Space and Opportunity enough to pay her Adorations, and to ſatisfy herſelf in the Truth of his Reſurrection. But theſe, and ſeveral other Interpretations of the like Kind, are far from being natural, and ſeem calculated on purpoſe

poſe to exclude the Notion of our Saviour's frequent Aſcenſions, during his Stay upon Earth, after his Reſurrection, which, in the Courſe of the ſubſequent Anſwers, we hope to evince to be true.

SOME are of Opinion, that the Report, which the *Evangeliſt* ſpeaks of, as current among the *Jews*, that *the Diſciples ſtole away the Body by Night*, was not that our Lord's Diſciples came and ſtole him away, but that the Soldiers were corrupted by the High-prieſts to ſay ſo. This, indeed, gives a quite different Turn to the Thing, and is very favourable to the *Chriſtian* Cauſe; but yet, whoever conſiders the circular Letters, mentioned by *Juſtin Martyr*, which the Rulers in *Jeruſalem* ſent to the principal *Jews* all the World over, concerning the Fact, and the great Pains, which (as *Tertullian* informs us) they every where took to propagate it, together with the Care, which he, and the other ancient Apologiſts employed to confute this ſenſeleſs, but malicious Lye, muſt needs be of a contrary Opinion, *viz.* that the Report was ſpread, not againſt the *Jewiſh* Rulers, but the *Chriſtian* Diſciples; and was not quite extinct, when St. *Matthew* wrote his Goſpel, Ch. xxviii. 15. which was much about eight Years after *Chriſt*'s Death.

LET us now return to our Hiſtory.

ON this ſame Day of *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection, as two of his Diſciples were taking a Walk, in the Afternoon, to a Town called *Emmaus*, and diſcourſing, as they went along, of what had lately happened; *Jeſus* joining himſelf to their Company, but they knew him not, and obſerving that they looked melancholy, he aſked them the Subject of their Diſcourſe, and what it was that made them ſo diſconſolate? To which one of them replied, *That the Subject of their Diſcourſe, was too notorious even to eſcape the Knowledge of the greateſt Stranger; that it was concerning* Jeſus *of* Nazareth, *who, indeed, was a great Prophet; one whom they expected would have*

been the King, and Redeemer of Iſrael; *but, to their great Diſappointment, had of late been delivered to Death, by their Rulers, and crucified. And, what is more aſtoniſhing, continued he, this very Day (which is the third ſince his Death) ſome Women of our Company, having been early at the Sepulchre, and not finding the Body, have ſurprized us with an Account, that they had ſeen a Viſion of Angels, who aſſured them that he was alive; which, in Part, was confirmed by ſome of our Men too, who went to the Sepulchre, and found it empty, but did not ſee him.*

HEREUPON our Lord took Occaſion to reprove their Incredulity, and, from the Teſtimony of the Prophets, to convince them, that it was highly neceſſary the *Meſſiah* ſhould ſuffer Death, and riſe again, in order to a glorious Exaltation. As they drew near to the Village, where they intended to ſpend that Night, *Jeſus* ſeemed as if he had farther to go; but they being unwilling to loſe his good Converſation, with ſome Intreaty, prevailed with him to ſtay. He did ſo: And, as he was ſitting at the Table with them, took Bread, bleſſed it, brake it, and delivered it to them, as he was wont to do; whereupon their Eyes were opened, and they knew him; but immediately he vaniſhed out of their Sight.

AS ſoon as the two Diſciples had recovered from their Surprize, they haſtened to *Jeruſalem*, where the Apoſtles were met together; who, upon their Arrival, informed them, that their Lord was certainly riſen, and had appeared unto *Peter*; whilſt they, in their Turns, related what had happened to them, in the Country; how *Jeſus* had walked, and converſed with them, and how they came to know him by breaking of Bread. But, notwithſtanding all theſe Teſtimonies, ſeveral among them remained ſtill incredulous.

FOR Fear of the *Jews* the Apoſtles had ſhut the Door, and were now ſit down to Supper in a private Room,

Room, late in the Evening, when our bleſſed Saviour came in, and ſaluted them; and, that they might not take him for a Spirit or Phantom, but for the very Perſon that was crucified in their Sight, he ſhewed them the Wounds in his Hands, his Feet, and his Side. Nay, that he might cure them of all Scruples and Doubtfulneſs, he eat a Piece of broiled Fiſh, and ſome Honey-comb before them all; and then, having a little upbraided them with their Unbelief, he gave them ſeveral great and weighty Inſtructions, a Power to underſtand the Scripture more perfectly, a Renovation of their Commiſſion to preach to all Nations, a Power and Authority to remit or retain Sins, a Communication of the bleſſed Spirit, by breathing on them, and a Promiſe of ſending him more plentifully (to enable them to be Witneſſes of his Reſurrection) before they were to depart from *Jeruſalem*. And thus ended the Firſt-Day of the Week, which, in Honour of our bleſſed Saviour's Reſurrection, has, ever ſince, been kept as the Sabbath among *Chriſtians*.

AT the above-mentioned Appearance of our bleſſed Saviour, all the Apoſtles, (except *Thomas*) were preſent; and, when they recounted to him every Particular, that had happened in his Abſence, ſo far was he from giving his Aſſent to them, that he openly declared, that unleſs he had the utmoſt Evidence of his Senſes, by putting his Finger into the Holes in his Hands and Side, he would not believe a Word of what they told him. On the Sunday following therefore, when, in the ſame Place, they were all met together, with the Doors ſhut, for fear of the *Jews*, and *Thomas* was with them, *Jeſus* came, and ſtanding in the Midſt of them, ſaluted them, as formerly, with the Bleſſing of Peace. After that turning to *Thomas*, he offered him the Satisfaction which he deſired, *viz.* the feeling his Hands and his Side, where the Nails and the Spear had pierced; which, when that Apoſtle had done, and upon

Conviction, cried out in Tranſport, *My God, and my Lord!* our Saviour gave him to underſtand, that his believing, after ſuch a demonſtrative Evidence, was neither ſo praiſe-worthy or rewardable, as was the Faith of thoſe who had not the like Conviction.

AFTER this Appearance to the Apoſtles, in a full Body, they all reſolved (purſuant to their Lord's Directions) to leave *Judæa*, and return into their own Province of *Galilee*. They had not been long there, before *Peter*, and ſeveral others of them went a fiſhing in the Lake or Sea of *Tiberias*; but, after much toiling all Night, they caught nothing. In the Morning, as they were making to Shore, a Perſon, unknown to them, being informed of their ill Succeſs, adviſed them to caſt their Net on the Right-Side of the Ship, which, when they had done, they encloſed ſo great a Number of large Fiſhes, as made *John* ſuſpect, that the Perſon on Shore might poſſibly be their Maſter. This he no ſooner ſuggeſted to *Peter*, but *Peter*, impatient of Delay, throws off his Coat, and jumps into the Sea, and gets to Land, while the other Apoſtles had much ado to haul the Veſſel, and the Net, ſo loaded with Fiſhes, ſafe to Shore. The Number of the Fiſhes was an hundred and fifty: But, what was more ſurprizing, at their Landing they found a Fire ready made, Fiſh broiling on it, and Bread ſtanding by. This notwithſtanding, our Lord ordered them to bring ſome of thoſe, which they had caught, and having aſked them to ſit down with him, he not only diſtributed them, but eat ſome of the Bread and Fiſh himſelf, to give them a ſtill farther Aſſurance of the Reality of his Reſurrection.

WHEN Dinner was ended, he entered into Converſation with *Peter*; and having thrice demanded of him, if he loved him, and thrice received a Declaration that he did, he each Time injoined him to take care of the Flock, which he had committed to him.

him. After this, in a figurative Speech, he ſignified to him, by what Manner of Death he was to glorify God, even by Crucifixion; but when *Peter* deſired to know the Fate of his favourite Apoſtle St. *John*, inſtead of gratifying his Curioſity, he required him rather to attend to his own Concerns, and, as he was to reſemble him in the Manner of his Death, ſo to endeavour to imitate him in his Deportment under it, *If I will that he ſtay till I come, what is that to thee, follow me?* This Anſwer of our Saviour's, however, gave Occaſion to a Report among the reſt of the Diſciples, that *John* was never to die; but himſelf confuted that Opinion in his Goſpel, and by ſurviviug the Fate of *Jeruſalem*, verified what our Saviour meant.

AFTER this our Lord, having appointed a ſolemn Meeting of as many of his Diſciples, as could conveniently be got together, and named a certain Mountain in *Galilee*, for that Purpoſe, he there appeared, not only to the eleven Apoſtles, but to five hundred Brethren at once. Here he acquainted his Apoſtles, that all Power, both in Heaven and Earth, was given to him; commanded them to inſtruct all Nations, and to baptize them *in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt*, and to preſs them to the Obſervation of all his Precepts; foretold them what mighty Signs and Wonders ſhould attend thoſe who were true Converts to his Religion; and promiſed them his daily Protection and Aſſiſtance, even unto the End of the World.

FORTY Days was the Time pre-ordained for our Lord's Continuance upon Earth, after his Reſurrection. Theſe Days were now almoſt expired, when the Apoſtles (according as they were ordered) with ſome of their ſelect Friends, returned to *Jeruſalem*, and there aſſembled themſelves in a private Place. Our bleſſed Saviour came to them; and, among other Things, relating to the Government of his Church, gave them particularly in Charge, that they ſhould

not

not depart from *Jeruſalem*, until they had received that miraculous Effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which he had promiſed, and would ſhortly ſend down upon them. This Effuſion of the Spirit the Apoſtles imagined might poſſibly be an Introduction to his glorious temporal Kingdom, which ſtill ran in their Heads; and therefore they aſked him, whether he intended, at that Time, *to reſtore the Kingdom to* Iſrael? but he checked their Enquiry, and gave them to underſtand, that, after the Deſcent of the *Holy Ghoſt* upon them, they would have juſter Notions of theſe Matters, and be ſufficiently enabled to be the authentick Witneſſes of his Life and Actions, all the World over; and with theſe Words he led all the Company out of the City, to that Part of Mount *Olivet*, which was neareſt to *Bethany*, and there, as he was lifting up his Hands, and giving them his Benediction, while they continued all in an adoring Poſture, he was parted from them, gradually taken up in a Cloud, and carried triumphantly into Heaven, where he now ſitteth at the Right-Hand of God, *Gad bleſſed for ever*. Amen.

AGAIN let us review the foregoing Paſſages.

EMMAUS (which was afterwards made a City, and called *Nicopolis)* was at this Time, a ſmall Village, about ſeven Miles diſtant from *Jeruſalem*, to the *Weſt*, where it is ſuppoſed, by *Bede* and others, that either *Cleophas*, or his Companion had an Houſe; which, by their importuning *Jeſus* to go with them, ſeems not improbable, becauſe they could not purpoſe to entertain him ſo commodiouſly, or hoſpitably in an Inn.

WHETHER it was, that after his Reſurrection, his Perſon was ſo conſiderably changed, that thoſe who knew him before, could not eaſily diſtinguiſh him; or that he appeared in an Habit quite different from what he uſed to wear, which, for ſome Time, might hinder them from recollecting who he was, or that he ſuſpended the Operations of their Senſes,

Senſes, that he might have a better Opportunity to inſtruct their Underſtandings; or that, by an extraordinary Power he withheld their Eyes from perceiving him: upon which, by removing of that Impediment, they immediately knew him. Any of theſe Cauſes will anſwer the Purpoſe better, than that we ſhould impute (as ſome do) their not knowing their Maſter, to their exceſſive Grief and Sorrow.

Two Diſciples going to *Emmaus* were diſcourſing together upon the late extraordinary Events. He, who was the Spokeſman upon this Occaſion, is ſaid to be *Cleophas*, *Luke* xxiv. 18. who was the Brother of *Joſeph*, the Huſband of the *Virgin Mary*, and ſo the reputed Uncle of *Chriſt*, whoſe Son *Simeon*, by the joint Conſent of the Apoſtles then living, was made Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, after St. *James*, as being the neareſt of Kin to our Saviour.

JESUS ſeemed willing to go farther; and ſo very probably would have done, had not the Diſciples preſſed him to ſtay with them: But, ſuppoſing he had been reſolved to abide with them, and was minded to try the Temper of his Fellow-Travellers, we cannot from hence charge him either with Diſſimulation or Deceit; becauſe, though our Words ought to be the certain Interpreters of our Thoughts, and are therefore not to be imployed ſo, as to deceive any, yet walking hath no certain Signification, nor was it ever inſtituted to be an Indication of the Mind.

THE original Word in St. *Luke*, which our Tranſlation has rendered *they conſtrained him*, in Terms, literal indeed, ſeems in this Place a little too harſh; becauſe it is very improbable (eſpecially if we conſider the Context) that theſe two Diſciples ſhould offer any Force or Violence to *Jeſus* to make him go with them.

ORIGEN is of Opinion, that our bleſſed Lord, for the forty Days, that he was upon Earth after his Reſurrection, could make himſelf viſible or inviſible, when, and to whom he pleaſed. It is not to be doubted, indeed

indeed but that he had the ſame Body that was depoſited in the Grave; but then, what the Powers of a raiſed and glorified Body (eſpecially when in Conjunction with the Deity) are, we cannot tell; only we may infer, that our Saviour could, at leaſt with the ſame Facility, diſappear to his Diſciples now, as he did to the *Jews*, when they were about to ſtone him, *John* viii. 53. which it is generally ſuppoſed he did, by the Medium of a Cloud caſt over his Body.

HE eat a Piece of broiled Fleſh, not to ſatisfy any Hunger, that his Body could ſuffer after its Reſurrection, but to prove to them that his Body was truly raiſed, and himſelf was really preſent. And, ſince it cannot be ſuppoſed, that *Chriſt*, in this Action, deſigned any Illuſion, it follows from his very eating, that his Body had thoſe Parts by which we chew our Meat, and withal a Stomach to receive it.

OUR Saviour gave his Diſciples a Power to underſtand the Scriptures more perfectly; this the *Evangeliſt* tells us, *Chriſt* did by *opening their Minds*, Luke xxiv. 25, for, 'tis one Thing, to open the Scriptures themſelves, or to explain them; and another to open their Underſtandings to perceive them; and *Chriſt*, very probably, did the latter, by giving them now ſome firſt Fruits of that Spirit of Prophecy on them at the Day of *Pentecoſt*.

THO' the *Greek* Word, tranſlated *Nation*, does, in ſome particular Places, ſignify the Tribes and Families of the *Jews*; yet this we are to obſerve, that wherever Mention is made of preaching the Goſpel, in order to gain Converts to the *Chriſtian* Faith, the Word relates primarily, to the ſeveral Parts of *Judea*, and to the *Jews*, whereſoever they are, in their Diſperſions abroad; then ſecondarily, to the *Gentiles* mingled with the *Jews*; and finally, to the whole *Gentile* World, when, upon the *Jews* rejecting the Goſpel, the Apoſtles were forced to depart from them; for ſuch the Tenor of their Commiſſion, and ſuch their conſtant Practice was. *It*

was

was neceſſary (ſay *Paul* and *Barnabas* to the *Jews*) *that the Word of God ſhould firſt have been ſpoken to you* (which refers, I ſuppoſe, to ſome Precept of *Chriſt* which made it neceſſary) *but ſeeing ye have put it from you; lo, we turn to the* Gentiles, *Acts* xiii. 46.

As *Chriſt*'s Reſurrection was a Matter of Fact, it muſt be proved by the Teſtimony of Eye-witneſſes, who, if they be honeſt Men, and ſuffer the greateſt Prejudices in their Fortunes, Reputation and Life, for this Teſtimony, give us the greater Reaſon to believe it. For their Honeſty will not ſuffer them, upon any Account whatever, to deviate from the Truth; their Intereſt and Prudence will not permit them (without any Neceſſity laid upon them) to teſtify a Falſhood, much more the groſſeſt Falſhood, to their utmoſt Damage, and without any Proſpect of Advantage; and then, if they confirm this their Teſtimony, by all Kinds of Signs, Miracles and wonderous Powers, exerciſed by themſelves, and others who embraced their Teſtimony; and if this be done in all Places, and on all Perſons, for a whole Age or Ages; this makes it a Thing impoſſible, that they ſhould thus atteſt a Lye: And therefore our Lord bids the Apoſtles ſtay at *Jeruſalem*, till they were thus empowered, by Virtue from on High, to confirm this Teſtimony.

THE *Jewiſh* Sabbath was, at firſt, inſtituted, not barely in Commemoration of God's Creating the World, but (as there is another Reaſon ſubjoined) in Memory of their Deliverance from the *Egyptian* Bondage: *For remember that thou waſt a Servant in the Land of* Egypt, *therefore the Lord thy God commandeth thee to keep the Sabbath-day*, Deut. v. 15. Now this Bondage of theirs was an Emblem of our Captivity under Sin, and their Deliverance a Type of our ſpiritual Redemption was accompliſhed, it became proper that the old *Jewiſh* Sabbath, *i. e.* the Seventh-day, ſhould be paſſed over, and the firſt

made Choice of, to be honoured with two ſuch glorious Miracles, as the Reſurrection of our bleſſed Lord from the Dead, and the Coming of the *Holy Ghoſt* from Heaven. After this, indeed, we find the Apoſtles frequenting the *Synagogue* on the *Jewiſh* Sabbath, but from the Time of our Lord's Reſurrection, they never did it (as before) according to the Commandment, but according to Cuſtom, or as the Manner was, *Acts* xvii. 6. and therefore we have Reaſon to believe, that from the very firſt, they looked upon the antient Sabbath ſupperſeded by this other, which from the Beginning they called *the Lord's Day*; and from the Beginning employed in Acts of religious Worſhip: To which Purpoſe we find *Ignatius* exhorting *Chriſtians* not to baptize with the *Jews*, but to live according to our Lord's Day, in which our Life aroſe with him.

WHAT might be the Occaſion of the Apoſtle *Thomas*'s Abſence, is variouſly conjectured. Some are of Opinion, that as all fled from their Maſter, when he was apprehended in the Garden, they did not ſo ſoon aſſemble again, but by Degrees dropped in, one by one, as they recovered from their Fright; and that therefore, at this Time, *Thomas* was not returned to the Company. But others, from the natural Temper of this Apoſtle (as he appears from the Scripture Paſſages, wherein he is concerned, to be very ſcrupulous, and hard of Belief) rather think, that taking Offence at the Apoſtles eaſy Credulity, (as he deemed it) and looking upon all that the Women from the Sepulchre, and the two Diſciples from *Emmaus* had ſaid, as ſo many idle Tales, he left the Company, in pure Diſguſt, not long before our Saviour come in.

THE Manner by which the Apoſtle *Thomas* might bring himſelf to the Reſolution, that he would believe nothing but from the Evidence of his Senſes, might poſſibly be by ſome ſuch Arguments, as theſe, ——Jeſus *of* Nazareth *was put to death upon the Croſs*;

Croſs; and being dead, was laid and ſealed up in a Sepulchre, which was ſtrictly watched by a Guard of Soldiers: But I am told, and required to believe, that notwithſtanding all this, he is riſen, and is indeed alive. Now ſurely, Things ſuitable to the ſtated Courſe of Nature, ſhould be believed, before ſuch as are quite beſide it; and for a Man to return to Life, is preternatural, but that thoſe, who report this, may be miſtaken, is very natural and uſual. Dead I ſaw him; but that he is riſen, I only hear. In what I ſee with mine own Eyes, I cannot eaſily be deceived; but in what I only hear, I may, and often am. Here being two Things then propoſed to my Belief, my Reaſon ſuggeſts to me, that I ought to choſe that which is more credible; but it ſeems more credible, that a ſmall Number of Witneſſes (frightned and diſturbed as they are) ſhould be deceived or (as honeſt as once they were) may conſpire to deceive me, than that one ſhould riſe from the Dead; and therefore, except, *&c.*

MY God, and my Lord! This is a noble Confeſſion of the Apoſtle's Faith; wherein he not only recognizes *Jeſus* for the *Meſſiah*, the very ſame Lord to whom he had been a Servant and Companion, during the Space of his Miniſtry, but owns likewiſe, and proclaims his divine Nature. For the Original here is in Terms ſo ſtrict, and with ſuch an Addition of the *Greek* Article, as the very *Hereticks* and Enemies to Truth confeſs to be the Character of the Word *God*, when taken in its moſt proper Senſe, and intended of the true God only. Nor can the Words (if put for a Note of Admiration only) be of Force ſufficient to expreſs any Conviction in *Thomas*; becauſe Expreſſions of Wonder, though they properly ſpeak Aſtoniſhment and Surprize, do not always imply Belief, and may therefore import the Strangeneſs, without the Truth of the Thing; whereas, our Saviour, in his Anſwer to *Thomas*, *becauſe thou haſt ſeen, thou haſt believed*, John xx. 29. accepts this as a full and ſufficient Declaration of his Aſſent;

and therefore to make it ſuch, we muſt allow that *Paraphraſe*, which ſome antient Tranſlations ſupply it with, by reading, *Thou art my Lord, thou art my God.*

THE Apoſtles as ſuch, had nothing to do, until the *Holy Ghoſt* ſhould deſcend upon them, and among the *Jews* it was accounted a Diſgrace to be idle. Since fiſhing therefore was the ordinary Occupation of ſeveral of them, in this intermediate Time, they thought it the beſt Way to betake themſelves to it; and that not only to keep themſelves imployed, but to ſupply their own Want of Neceſſaries likewiſe, until they ſhould have a proper Call to the Miniſtry; when in all Probability, they gave over the Labours of their ſecular Employs, and devoted themſelves intirely to that Work.

BY the Apoſtles not knowing our Saviour, one would think, that our bleſſed Lord, after his Reſurrection, was not a little changed in his outward Appearance, ſince his Apoſtles (notwithſtanding more Interviews than one) could not ſo readily diſtinguiſh him either by his Voice or Looks. Upon this Occaſion, however, he ſeems, by this Queſtion, *John* xxi. 5. to perſonate one, who might be come to buy ſome Fiſh of them, and under that Guiſe (whilſt they were buſy and employed) might more eaſily paſs upon them for a Stranger.

PETER hearing that the Lord was on Shore, throws on his Coat, and jumps into the Sea, to get the ſooner to him. The Text tells us, that he was naked before; but what is called naked, ſignifies only to have Part of the Body uncovered, or to be without a Gown or upper Garment, according to the Cuſtom of the *Eaſtern* People, and of the *Romans*, who, when they went Abroad, or made any publick Appearance, wore a long upper Garment, called in *Latin*, *Toga*. Of this Kind was what the Evangeliſt calls a Fiſher's Coat: and from hence it ſeems pretty plain, that *Peter* did not ſwim (as 'tis uſually

uſually thought) but waded to Land; ſince, if Decency was the Motive of putting on his Coat, he could not have preſerved that Decency, had he come dripping wet (as he muſt have been, upon the Suppoſition of his ſwimming) into his Maſter's Preſence.

THE Fire, Fiſh and Bread on the Shore were all created, and produced by *Chriſt* out of nothing, to evidence, at this Time, his divine Power; but leſt there ſhould be thought any Deluſion in theſe, he ordered likewiſe ſome of the other, that were juſt then taken, to be dreſſed; and that they might not take him for an Apparition only, he invited them to dine with him. As therefore by the Miracle of creating, and miraculouſly catching the Fiſhes, he proved himſelf to be a God, ſo by his preſent eating of the Fiſh, he evidenced himſelf to be a Man, and conſequently teaches us, that our exalted High-prieſt continues our Kinſman in Heaven.

'TIS not indeed ſaid expreſly, that at this Time he did eat; but ſince St. *Peter* tells us, that *they did eat and drink with him after he roſe from the Dead*, Acts x. 41. and St. *Luke* teſtifies, that, on another Occaſion, *he did eat before them*, Chap. xxiv. 42, 43. as he did then for the Confirmation of the Reſurrection, 'tis hardly to be doubted, but that he did it now for the ſame End.

OUR Saviour's Words to St. *Peter* are, Simon, *Son of* Jonas, *loveſt thou me more than theſe*, John xxi. 15. More than theſe what? Some will tell us, that our Saviour here pointing at the Nets and Fiſhing-boats, demanded of *Peter* whether he loved him, and his Service, better than his ordinary Employment and Occupation; but this is a forced and jejune Expoſition. The Apoſtle to be ſure, before our Lord's being taken into Cuſtody, had been very liberal in his Profeſſions of Love to him. He had promiſed to go with him to Priſon and to Death; and to ſhew how much he ſurpaſſed the Reſt of his Brethren,

Brethren, *tho' all ſhould be offended becauſe of thee*, ſays he, *yet will not I*, Matt. xxvi. 33. and yet, upon his Approach of the firſt Danger, he forgot all his Promiſes, and behaved more ingloriouſly than the Reſt. 'Tis in Alluſion therefore to this, that our Lord begins this Diſcourſe with *Peter*; that he calls to his Mind his former Speeches, and contrary Performances; and, by thrice repeating this Queſtion, *Peter loveſt thou me?* in reſpect of his three Denials; and, at firſt adding the Words, *more than theſe*, in regard to his magnifying his Love, above all others, he now engages him, by the Senſe and Conſideration of his Fall, to a better Diſcharge, and a more conſtant Expreſſion of his Love, in converting Men to the Faith of *Chriſt*.

THE Occaſion of St. *Peter*'s being put to Death, according to the Prediction of our Saviour, is generally reported to be, —— That he, aſſiſted by St. *Paul*, had here alſo confounded the diabolical Illuſions of *Simon Magus:* Whereupon *Nero*, who was a Favourer of Magicians, being provoked (or as others think, to ingratiate himſelf with the People of *Rome*, after firing their City) gave Orders for his Execution, which the *Prefects* (in the Emperor's Abſence) took Care to ſee executed upon him and St. *Paul*, at the ſame Time. The latter, as a Denizen, was beheaded with a Sword, but St. *Peter*, who had no Claim to the like Privilege, was ſentenced to Crucifixion. This, and the Torments preparatory to it, he underwent with marvellous Patience; and, as a Mark of his Humility, requeſted, and obtained to have his Body faſtened to the Croſs, with his Head downward, judging it too great an Honour to ſuffer in the ſame Manner and Poſture that his Lord had done.

IF I will that he ſtay till I come, i. e. come in Judgment, to take Vengeance on the *Jews*. For tho' there are but two perſonal Advents, mentioned in Scripture; the firſt, when our Lord came into the

the World to redeem it, and the ſecond, when he ſhall return again to judge it; yet this is no Objection againſt his intermediate Advent, which was not perſonal by any viſible Deſcent of his from Heaven, but virtual, and affected by his ſending the *Roman* Army againſt the *Jews*, and giving Signs from Heaven, and in the Clouds, of their approaching Ruin. So that the Senſe of our Saviour's Words is,——*If my Pleaſure is, that he live till the Diſſolution of the* Jewiſh *State:* And accordingly we find, that tho' *Peter* was put to death under *Nero*, yet St. *John* continued even to the Time of *Trajan*'s Reign, above an hundred Years after our Saviour's Birth, and ſo thirty Years after that this Coming of his was paſt.

THIS Anſwer of our Saviour occaſioned a Report among the Diſciples, that *John* ſhould never die, becauſe the *Chriſtians*, at that Time, by the Coming of *Chriſt*, underſtood the laſt Judgment; whereas our Saviour intended it of the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, which, in effect, was a full Emblem of the final Diſſolution of all Things.

THE Mountain, which our Saviour appointed to meet his Diſciples upon, is generally ſuppoſed to be *Tabor*, the Place where our Lord was transfigured; tho' ſome ſuppoſe it to be one that ſtood nearer the Lake of *Tiberias*.

WHEN our Saviour foretold what mighty Signs and Wonders ſhould attend the true Converts of his Religion, we are not to ſuppoſe that he promiſed the Gift of Miracles to every *Chriſtian* Convert, ſince this would have made Miracles (which ſhould only be imployed on important Occaſions, where the Glory of God, or the Good of Mankind is concerned) too common, and conſequently of no Validity at all. So that this Promiſe, though expreſſed in general Terms, muſt neceſſarily be to the Apoſtles, and apoſtolick Men. Of *their caſting out Devils, healing Diſeaſes, and ſpeaking with new Tongues*, we have Inſtances

Inſtances almoſt innumerable. And from St. *Paul* it appears, that this Promiſe was literally fulfilled, when, after a Viper had faſtened upon his Hand, for ſome Time, he ſhook it off into the Fire, without receiving any Hurt, *Acts* xxviii. 5. and to the drinking of deadly Poiſons, we have it recorded by *Papias* of *Barſabas*, ſurnamed the *Juſt*; by *Ado*, in his *Martyrology* of the *Cæcilian* Soldier; and by *Gregory* of *Tours*; of *Sabinus* Biſhop of *Ganoſo*; that they three did without any Miſchief to themſelves. But as Miracles of this Kind were more liable to Exceptions, than ſuch as were performed upon Unbelievers, (Men being apt to think, that there might be ſome Antidotes againſt the Venom of theſe Beaſts, or the pernicious Effects of theſe Draughts) it may be owned, that Providence thought fit to be more ſparing in affording theſe.

LO, I am with you always to the End of the World, Matt. xxviii. 20. i. e. *I am, and will be with you, and your Succeſſors, lawfully called by my Power and Authority, and by the Bleſſing and Aſſiſtance of the Holy Spirit; I will be with you, to uphold my Ordinance, to protect, encourage, and reward you, and all your Succeſſors, in the faithful Diſcharge of your Truſt; and this not for a Day, a Year, or an Age, but even to the End and Conſummation of all Ages.* From whence we may learn, that the Miniſtry of the Word, and Adminiſtration of the Sacraments are a ſtanding and perpetual Ordinance, to continue in the *Chriſtian* Church, throughout all Ages; and that all the faithful Miniſters of *Chriſt*, in what Part of the World ſoever God ſhall caſt caſt their Lot, and in what Time ſoever they ſhall happen to live, may comfortably expect *Chriſt*'s gracious Preſence with their Perſons, and his Bleſſing upon their Labours.

Of all Places the Apoſtles would leaſt of all have choſen *Jeruſalem* to tarry in, had not our Lord poſitively commanded it there. For *Jeruſalem* was now a juſtly

a juſtly abhorred and deteſted Place, reeking freſh with the Blood of the holy and innocent *Jeſus*; and yet *Jeruſalem* is the Place, choſen by *Chriſt*, for the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit upon his Apoſtles, becauſe there was the greateſt Company of Spectators to behold this noble Work, and to be wrought upon by it; and becauſe there had been the Scenes of his greateſt Humiliation, and therefore, there he was minded to ſhew forth his Power and Glory.

THE Reaſons, aſſignable for this wonderful Diſpenſation, the Effuſion of the *Holy Ghoſt*, are, 1*ſt*, To enable them to be powerful Witneſſes of our Lord's Reſurrection, *Luke* xxiv. 48. and conſequently, that he was the true *Meſſiah*, or the Prophet, who was to be the Saviour of it: And therefore St. *Peter* ſpeaks thus to the *Jews*, *Ye have killed the Prince of Life, whom God hath raiſed from the Dead, of which we are Witneſſes*, Acts iii. 15. 2*dly*, To enable them to give an exact Account (as far as divine Wiſdom ſaw it neceſſary) of what our Saviour did, and taught; and therefore himſelf tells them, that *the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, ſhould teſtify of him, and bring all the Things to their Remembrance, which he had ſaid unto them*, John xv. 26. xiv. 26. and 3*dly*, To make them *able Miniſters of the New Teſtament*, *i. e.* able to acquaint *Chriſtians* with all ſaving Truth, and to teach them all Things that he had commanded to be obſerved, throughout all the Ages of the Church; and upon the Strength of this Promiſe, all *Chriſtians*, in all Ages, have believed, that the Apoſtles and Writers of the *New Teſtament*, both ſpake and wrote as they were moved, or directed by the Spirit of God, and received thoſe Doctrines they taught, or indited, *not as the Word of Men, but, as they were in Truth, the Word of God*, 1 Theſ. ii. 13.

THUS the Apoſtles preached in the moſt conſiderable Cities of the then-known World; as at *Antioch*,

Alexandria, and even at *Rome* itſelf, as well as at *Jeruſalem* and *Samaria*. They taught at *Athens*, and *Corinth*, and throughout all *Greece*, in ſuch Towns as were moſt learned, moſt corrupt, and moſt idolatrous. It was in the Preſence of all Nations, of *Greeks* and *Barbarians*, of the Learned and the Ignorant, of all *Jews* and *Romans*, of Princes and their People, that the Diſciples of *Jeſus Chriſt* gave Witneſs of the Wonders they had *ſeen with their Eyes, heard with their Ears, and touched with their Hands*, and particularly of their Lord's Reſurrection: Which Teſtimony they ſupported, without any Intereſt, and againſt all the Reaſons of human Prudence, even to their laſt Breath, and ſealed it with their Blood. Such was the Eſtabliſhment of *Chriſtianity!*

BY *Chriſt*'s lifting up his Hands, and giving them his Benediction, we learn, that the Cuſtom among the *Jews* was, to give the Benediction to a good Number, or Congregation of People, with an Elevation, and Extenſion of the Hands, as appears from the Practice of *Aaron*, *Lev.* ix. 22. But to any particular Perſon, the Bleſſing was given with the Impoſition of Hands, as the Example of *Jacob*, with regard to *Ephraim*, and *Manaſſeh*, plainly ſhews, *Gen.* xlviii 14.

THE Aſcenſion of *Chriſt* into Heaven muſt be underſtood of his *human* Nature only, becauſe the *divine* Nature fills all Places, both in Heaven and Earth, and is, at all Times, incapable of that, which we properly call *Motion.* The ſame Body of *Chriſt*, therefore which was born, and ſuffered, and died, was actually carried up thither; and ſo our Saviour's Aſcenſion was no imaginary and figurative, but a real, proper, and bodily Aſcent into Heaven, and that, in the moſt elevated Part, and nobleſt Signification, that this Word, at any Time does, or can poſſibly admit.

* *SITTING at the Right-hand of God*, is one of thoſe Expreſſions, wherein the *Holy Ghoſt* condeſcends

and

to our Capacity, by attributing to God the Parts, and Geſture of an human Body. The Hand is the chief Inſtrument of exerting our Strength, and therefore often uſed to denote the Power of God. The Right-hand is the uſual Place of Honour and Reſpect, and therefore this denotes the higheſt Dignity. Sitting, in like manner intimates a State of Eaſe, and is properly the Poſture of thoſe, that are in Power and Authority, of Kings upon their Thrones, and Magiſtrates in Cours of Juſtice; and therefore *Chriſt's ſitting at God's Right-hand* implies thus much, —That the ſame Bliſs, Glory, and Power, which, as the Son of God, he did, before his Incarnation, enjoy with his Father from all Eternity, his human Nature is now made Partaker of, in the higheſt Heavens. That this *God-man* is inveſted with an abſolute Authority, and boundleſs Dominion, and does now, in *both* Natures, *rule*, as he ſhall one Day *judge*, the whole World; and, till that Day come it is the Duty of us, and all Mankind, to reverence and obey, to truſt in, and pray to him, as our only Head and King, and our rightful and univerſal Lord.

THE LIVES OF THE APOSTLES.

CHAP. V.

The LIFE *of St.* PETER.

THE Land of *Paleſtine* was, at and before the Coming of our Bleſſed Saviour, diſtinguiſhed into three ſeveral Provinces, *Judea*, *Samaria* and *Galilee*. This laſt was divided into the *Upper* and the *Lower*. In the *Upper*, called alſo *Galilee of the Gentiles*, within the Diviſion antiently belonged to the Tribe of *Naphthali*, ſtood *Bethſaida*. It was formerly an obſcure and inconſiderable Village, till lately re-edified and enlarged by *Philip the Tetrarch*; and being by him evidenced to the Place and Title of a City, repleniſhed with Inhabitants, and fortified with Power and Strength, and in Honour of *Julia*, the Daughter of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, by him ſtiled *Julias*. It was ſituated upon the Banks of the *Sea of Galilee*, and a Wilderneſs on the other Side, thence called the

the *Deſart of Bethſaida*, whether our Saviour uſed often to retire; the Privacies and Solitudes of the Place advantageouſly miniſtring to divine Contemplations. But *Bethſaida* was not ſo remarkable for this adjoining Wilderneſs, as itſelf was memorable for a worſe Sort of Barrenneſs, Ingratitude and Unprofitableneſs under the Influences of *Chriſt*'s Sermons and Miracles; thence ſeverely upbraided by him, and threatned with one of his deepeſt Woes, *Woe unto thee* Chorazin, *woe unto thee* Bethſaida, &c. A Woe that it ſeems ſtuck cloſe to it; for whatever it was at this Time, one who ſurveyed it in the laſt Age tells us, that it was ſhrunk again into a very mean and ſmall Village, conſiſting only of a few Cottages of *Moors* and wild *Arabs*; and later Travellers have ſince aſſured us, that even theſe are dwindled away into a poor Cottage at this Day. So fatally does Sin undermine the greateſt, the goodlieſt Places; ſo certainly does God's Word take place, and not one *Iota* either of his Promiſes or Threatnings fall to the Ground. Next to the Honour that was done it by our Saviour's Preſence, who living moſt in theſe Parts, frequently reſorted thither, it had nothing greater to recommend it to the Notice of Poſterity, than that (beſides ſome other of the Apoſtles) it was the Birth-place of St. *Peter*; a Perſon, how inconſiderable in his private Fortunes, yet of great Note and Eminency, as one of the prime Embaſſadors of the Son of God, to whom both ſacred and eccleſiaſtical Stories give, though not a Superiority, a Precedency in the College of Apoſtles.

The particular Time of his Birth cannot be recovered, no probable Footſteps or Intimations being left of it: In the general, we may conclude him at leaſt ten Years elder than his Maſter; his married Condition, and ſettled Courſe of Life, at his firſt coming to *Chriſt*, and that Authority and Reſpect which the Gravity of his Perſon procured him amongſt the

the Reſt of the Apoſtles, can ſpeak him no leſs; but for any Thing more particular and poſitive in this Matter, I ſee no Reaſon to affirm. Indeed, might we truſt the Account, which one (who pretends to calculate his Nativity with Oſtentation enough) has given of it, we are told that he was three Years before the bleſſed Virgin, and juſt ſeventeen before the Incarnation of our Saviour. But let us view his Account.

He was born in the Year from the *Creation of the World* 4034: from *the Flood* 2378; in the 8th Year of *Octavius Auguſtus*, the 24th of the *Conſulſhip*, and the 12th from the *Battle of* Actium; in the 20th Year of *Herod*'s Reign; three Years before the Birth of the *Bleſſed Virgin*, and ſeventeen Years before the Birth of *Chriſt*.

When I met ſuch a pompous Train of *Epocha's*, the leaſt I expected was Truth and Certainty. This Computation he grounds upon the Date of St. *Peter*'s Death, placed (as elſewhere he tells us) by *Bellarmine* in the 86th Year of his Age; ſo that recounting from the Year of *Chriſt* the 69th, when *Peter* is commonly ſaid to have ſuffered, he runs up his Age to his Birth, and ſpreads it out into ſo many ſeveral Dates: But alas all is built upon a ſandy Bottom. For, beſides his Miſtake about the Year of the World, few of his Dates hold due Correſpondence. But the worſt of it is, that after all this, *Bellarmine* (upon whoſe ſingle Teſtimony all this fine Fabrick is erected) ſays no ſuch Thing, but only ſuppoſes, merely for Argument-ſake, that St. *Peter* might very well be 86 ('tis erroneouſly printed 76) Years old at the Time of his Martyrdom. So far will Confidence, or Ignorance, or both carry Men aſide, if it could be a Miſtake, and not rather a bold impoſing upon the World. But of this enough, and perhaps more than it deſerves.

Being circumciſed according to the Rites of the *Moſaick* Law, the Name given him at his Circumciſion

ciſion was *Simon* or *Symeon*, a Name common amongſt the *Jews*, eſpecially in the latter Times. This was afterwards, by our Saviour not aboliſhed, but additioned with the Title of *Cephas*, which in *Syriac* (the vulgar Language of the *Jews* at that Time) ſignifying a Stone or Rock, was thence derived into the *Greek* Word *Petros*, and by us *Peter*: So far was *Heſychius* out when rendring *Petros* an *Expounder* or *Interpreter*, probably deriving it from the *Hebrew* Word which ſignifies to *explain* and *interpret*. By this new Impoſition our Lord ſeemed to denote the Firmneſs and Conſtancy of his Faith, and his vigorous Activity in building up the Church, as a *ſpiritual Houſe* upon the *true Rock*, *the living and Corner-Stone*, *choſen of God*, *and precious*, as St. *Peter* himſelf expreſſes it. Nor can our Saviour be underſtood to have hereby conferred upon him any peculiar Supremacy or Sovereignty above, much leſs over the reſt of the Apoſtles; for in Reſpect of the great Truſt committed to them, and their being ſent to plant *Chriſtanity* in the World, they are all equally ſtiled Foundations: Nor is it accountable either to Scripture or Reaſon, to ſuppoſe, that by this Name our Lord ſhould deſign the Perſon of *Peter* to be that very Rock, upon which his Church was to be built. In a fond Imitation of this Name given to St. *Peter*, thoſe who pretended to be his Succeſſors in the See of *Rome*, uſually lay by their own, and aſſume a new Name upon their Advancement to the apoſtolic Chair, it being one of the firſt Queſtions which the Cardinals put to the new-elected Pope, *By what Name he will be pleaſed to be called.* This Cuſtom firſt began about the Year 844, when *Peter di Bocco-Proco* (or *Swines-mouth*) being choſen Pope, changed his Name into *Sergius the Second*; probably not ſo much to avoid the Uncomelineſs of his own Name, as if unbefitting the Dignity of his Place (for this being but his paternal Name would after have been no Part of his pontificial Stile and Title)

have

as out of a mighty Reverence to St. *Peter*, accounting himſelf not worthy to bear his Name though it was his own baptiſmal Name. Certain it is, that none of the Biſhops of that See ever aſſumed St. *Peter*'s Name; and ſome, who have had it as their Chriſtian Name before, have laid it aſide upon their Election to the Papacy. But to return to our Apoſtle.

His Father was *Jonah*, probably a Fiſherman of *Bethſaida*; for the ſacred Story takes no farther Notice of him, than by the bare Mention of his Name; and I believe there had been no great Danger of Miſtake, though *Metaphraſtes* had not told us, that it was not *Jonas* the Prophet, who came out of the Belly of the Whale. Brother he was to St. *Andrew* the Apoſtle, and ſome Queſtion there is amongſt the Antients which was the elder Brother. *Epiphanius* (probably from ſome Tradition current in his Time) clearly adjudges it to St. *Andrew*, herein univerſally followed by thoſe of the Church of *Rome*, that the Precedency given to St. *Peter* may not ſeem to be put upon Account of his Seniority. But to him we may oppoſe the Authority of St. *Chryſoſtom.* a Perſon equal both in Time and Credit, who expreſly ſays, though *Andrew* came later into Life than *Peter*, yet he firſt brought him to the Knowledge of the Goſpel, which *Baronius*, againſt all Pretence of Reaſon, would underſtand of his entring into eternal Life: Beſides, St. *Jerom*, *Caſſian*, *Bede*, and others, are for St. *Peter* being the elder Brother, expreſly aſcribing it to his Age that he rather than any other, was Preſident of the College of Apoſtles. However it was, it ſounds not a little to the Honour of their Father, (as of *Zebedee* alſo in the like Caſe) that of but twelve Apoſtles two of his Sons were taken into the Number. In his Youth he was brought up to fiſhing, which we may gueſs to have been the ſtaple Trade of *Bethſaida*, (which hence probably borrowed its Name, ſignifying an

Houſe

House or *Habitation of fishing*, though others render it by *Hunting*, (the *Hebrew* Word equally being either) much advantaged therein by the Neighbourhood of the *Lake of Gennesareth*, (on whose Banks it stood) also the *Sea of Galilee*, and the *Sea of Tiberias*, according to the Mode of the *Hebrew* Language, wherein all greater Confluences of Waters are called Seas. Of this Lake the *Jews* have a Saying, that *of all the seven Seas which God created, he made Choice of none but the* Sea of Gennesareth; which, however intended by them, is true only in this Respect, that our Blessed Saviour made Choice of it, to honour it with the Frequency of his Presence, and the Power of his miraculous Operations. In the Length it was an hundred Furlongs, and about forty over; the Water of it pure and clear, sweet and most fit to drink; stored it was with several Sorts of Fish, and those different both in Kind and Taste from those in other Places. Here it was that *Peter* closely followed the Exercise of his Calling; from whence it seems he afterwards removed to *Capernaum*, (probably upon his Marriage) at least he frequently resided there, for there we meet with his House, and we find him paying of Tribute: An House, over which *Nicephorus* tells us, that *Helen*, the Mother of *Constantine*, erected a beautiful Church, to the Honour of St. *Peter*. This Place was equally advantageous for the Managery of his Trade, standing upon the Influx of *Jordan* into the *Sea of Galilee*, and where he might as well reap the Fruits of an honest and industrious Diligence. A mean, I confess it was, and no more servile Course of Life, as which besides the great Pains and Labour it required, exposed him to all Injuries of Wind and Weather, to the Storms of the Sea, the Darkness and Tempestuousness of the Night, and all to make a small Return. But Meanness is no Bar in God's Way, the Poor if virtuous, are as to Heaven, as the Wealthy and the Honourable equally alike to him, with whom *there is no*

Reſpect of *Perſons*. Nay, our Lord ſeemed to caſt a peculiar Honour upon this Profeſſion, when afterwards calling him, and ſome others of the ſaid Trade, from catching of Fiſh, to be (as he told them) *Fiſhers of Men*.

And here we may juſtly reflect upon the wiſe and admirable Methods of the divine Providence, which in planting and propagating the *Chriſtian* Religion in the World, made Choice of ſuch mean and unlikely Inſtruments, that he ſhould hide theſe Things from the wiſe and prudent, and reveal them unto Babes, Men that had not been educated in the *Academy*, and the Schools of Learning, but brought up to a Trade to catch Fiſh and mend Nets; moſt of the Apoſtles being taken from the meaneſt Trades, and all of them (St. *Paul* excepted) unfurniſhed of all Arts of Learning, and Advantages of a liberal and ingenuous Education; and yet theſe were the Men that were deſigned to run down the World, and to overturn the Learning, and the Prudent. Certainly had humane Wiſdom been to manage the Buſineſs, it would have taken quite other Meaſures, and choſe of the profoundeſt *Rabbins*, the acuteſt *Philoſophers*, the ſmootheſt Orators, ſuch as would have been moſt likely by Strength of Reaſon, and Arts of Rhetorick to have triumphed over the Minds of Men to grapple with the Stubbornneſs of the *Jews*, and baffle the finer Notions and Speculations of the *Greeks*. We find that thoſe Sects of Philoſophy that gained moſt Credit in the Heathen World, did it this Way, by their Eminency in ſome Arts and Sciences, whereby they recommended themſelves to the Acceptance of the wiſer and more ingenious Part of Mankind. *Julian* the Apoſtate thinks it a reaſonable Exception againſt the *Jewiſh* Prophets, that they were incompetent Meſſengers and Interpreters of the divine Will, becauſe they had not their Minds cleared and purged, by paſſing through the Circle of polite Arts and Learning. Why, now this

is the Wonder of it, that the firſt Preachers of the Goſpel ſhould be ſuch rude unlearned Men, and yet ſo ſuddenly, ſo powerfully prevail over the learned World, and conquer ſo many, who had the greateſt Parts and Abilities, and the ſtrongeſt Prejudices againſt it, to the Simplicity of the Goſpel. When *Celſus* objected that the Apoſtles were but a Company of mean and illiterate Perſons, ſorry Mariners and Fiſhermen, *Origen* quickly returns upon him with this Anſwer, "That hence it was plainly "evident, that they taught *Chriſtianity* by a divine "Power, when ſuch Perſons were able, with ſuch "an uncontrouled Succeſs, to ſubdue Men to the "Obedience of his Word; for that they had no "eloquent Tongues, no ſubtile and diſcurſive "Heads, none of the refined and rhetorical Arts of "*Greece* to conquer the Minds of Men. For my "Part (ſays he, in another Place) I verily believe "that the Holy *Jeſus* purpoſely made uſe of ſuch "Preachers of his Doctrine, that there might be no "Suſpicion, that they came inſtructed with Arts of "Sophiſtry; but that it might be clearly manifeſted "to all the World, that there was no crafty Deſign "in it, and that they had a divine Power going "along with them, which was more efficacious, than "than the greateſt Volubility of Expreſſion, or Or-"naments of Speech, or the Artifices which were "uſed in the *Grecian* Compoſitions." Had it not been for this divine Power that upheld it (as he elſewhere argues) the *Chriſtian* Religion muſt needs have ſunk under thoſe weighty Preſſures that lay upon it; having not only to contend with the potent Oppoſition of the Senate, Emperors, People, and the whole Power of the *Roman* Empire, but to conflict with thoſe home-bred Wants and Neceſſities, wherewith its own Profeſſors were oppreſſed and burthened.

It could not but greatly vindicate the Apoſtles from all Suſpicion of Forgery and Impoſture in

the Thoughts of ſober and unbiaſſed Perſons to ſee their Doctrine readily entertained by Men of the moſt diſcerning and inquiſitive Mind. Had they dealt only with the Rude and the Simple, the Idiot and the Unlearned, there might have been ſome Pretence to ſuſpect, that they lay in wait to deceive, and deſigned to impoſe upon the World by crafty and inſinuating Arts and Methods. But, alas, they had other Perſons to deal with; Men of the acuteſt Wits, and moſt profound Abilities; the wiſeſt Philoſophers, and the moſt ſubtile Diſputants, able to weigh an Argurment with the greateſt Accuracy, and to decline the Force of the ſtrongeſt Reaſonings, and who had their Parts edg'd with the keeneſt Prejudices of Education, and a mighty Veneration for the Religion of their Country, a Religion that for many Ages had governed the World, and taken firm Poſſeſſion of the Minds of Men. And yet, notwithſtanding all theſe Diſadvantages, theſe plain Men conquered the Wiſe and the Learned, and brought them over to that Doctrine that was deſpiſed and ſcorned, oppoſed and perſecuted, and that had nothing but its own native Excellency to recommend it: A clear Evidence that there was ſomething in it beyond the Craft and Power of Men. *Is not this*, ſays an elegant Apologiſt, making his Addreſs to the Heathens) *enough to make you believe and entertain it, to conſider that in ſo ſhort a Time it has diffuſed itſelf over the whole World, civilized the moſt barbarous Nations, ſoftened the roughest and moſt intractable Tempers; that the greateſt Wits and Scholars, Orators, Grammarians, Rhetoricians, Lawyers, Phyſicians and Philoſophers have quitted their formerly dear and beloved Sentiments, and heartily embraced the Precepts and Doctrines of the Goſpel?* Upon this Account *Theodoret* does with no leſs Truth than Elegancy, inſult and triumph over the Heathens: He tells them, that whoever would be at the Pains to compare the beſt Lawmakers, either amongſt the

Greeks

Greeks or *Romans*, with our Fiſhermen and Publicans, would ſoon perceive what a divine Virtue and Efficacy there was in them above all others, whereby they did not only conquer their Neighbours, not only the *Greeks* and *Romans*, but brought over the moſt barbarous Nations to a Compliance with the Laws of the Goſpel; and that not by Force of Arms, not by numerous Bands of Soldiers, not by Methods of Torture and Cruelty, but by meek Perſuaſives, and a convincing the World of the Excellency and Uſefulneſs of thoſe Laws which they propounded to them. A Thing which the wiſeſt and beſt Men of the heathen World could never do, to make their *Dogmata* and Inſtitutions univerſally obtain; nay that *Plato* himſelf could never, by all his plauſible and inſinuative Arts, make his Laws to be entertained by his own dear *Athenians*. He farther ſhews them, that the Laws publiſhed by our Fiſhermen and Tent-makers, could never be aboliſhed (like thoſe made by the beſt among them) by the Policies of *Caius*, the Cruelties of *Nero*, or any of the ſucceeding Emperors, but ſtill they went on conquering and to conquer, and made Millions, both of Men and Women willing to embrace Flames, and to encounter Death in its moſt horrid Shapes, rather than diſown and forſake them: whereof he calls to witneſs thoſe many Churches and Monuments every where erected to the Memory of *Chriſtian* Martyrs, no leſs to the Honour than Advantage of thoſe Cities and Countries, and in ſome Senſe to all Mankind.

THOUGH we find not whether *Peter*, before his coming to *Chriſt*, was engaged in any of the particular Sects at this Time in the *Jewiſh* Church, yet is it greatly probable, that he was one of the Diſciples of *John the Baptiſt*. For firſt, 'tis certain that his Brother *Andrew* was ſo; and we can hardly think, theſe two Brothers ſhould draw contrary ways, or that he who was ſo ready to bring his Brother the early

early Tidings of the *Meſſiah*, that the *Sun of Righteouſneſs* was already riſen in thoſe Parts, ſhould not be ſolicitous to bring him under the Diſcipline and Influence of *John the Baptiſt*, the *Day-ſtar* that went before him. Secondly, *Peter*'s Forwardneſs and Curioſity at the firſt News of *Chriſt*'s appearing, to come to him, and converſe with him, ſhews that his Expectations had been awakened, and ſome Light in this Matter convey'd to him by the Preaching and Miniſtry of *John*, who was *the Voice of one crying in the Wilderneſs, Prepare ye the Way of the Lord, make his Paths ſtreight*, ſhewing them who it was that was coming after him.

His firſt Acquaintance with *Chriſt* commenced in this Manner: The Bleſſed *Jeſus* having for thirty Years paſſed through the Solitudes of a private Life, had lately been baptized in *Jordan*, and there publickly owned to be the *Son of God* by the moſt ſolemn Atteſtations that Heaven could give him; whereupon he was immediately hurried into the Wilderneſs, to a perſonal Conteſt with the Devil, for forty Days together. So natural is it to the Enemy of Mankind to malign our Happineſs, and to ſeek to blaſt our Joys, when we are under the higeſt Inſtances of the Divine Grace and Favour. His Enemy being conquered in three ſet Battles, and fled, he returned hence, and came down to *Bethabara*, beyond *Jordan*, where *John* was baptizing his Proſelytes, and endeavouring to ſatisfy the *Jews*, who had ſent him curiouſly to enquire concerning this new *Meſſiah* that appeared among them. Upon the great Teſtimony which the *Baptiſt* gave him, and his pointing to our Lord then paſſing by him; two of *John*'s Diſciples, who were then with him, preſently followed after *Chriſt*, one of whom was *Andrew Simon*'s Brother. It was towards Evening when they came, and therefore probably they ſtaid with him all Night, during which *Andrew* had Opportunity to inform himſelf, and to ſatisfy his moſt

ſcrupulous

ſcrupulous Enquiries. Early the next Morning (if not that very Evening) he haſtened to acquaint his Brother *Simon* with theſe glad Tidings. 'Tis not enough to be good and happy alone; Religion is a communicative Principle, that, like the Circles in the Water, delights to multiply itſelf, and to diffuſe its Influences round about it, and eſpecially upon thoſe, whom Nature has placed neareſt to us. He tells him, they had found the long-look'd-for *Meſſiah*, him whom *Moſes* and the Prophets had ſo ſignally foretold, and whom all the Devout and Pious of that Nation had ſo long expected.

SIMON, one of thoſe who *looked for the Kingdom of God, and waited for the Redemption of* Iſrael, raviſhed with this joyful News, and impatient of Delay, preſently follows his Brother to the Place; whither he was no ſooner come, but our Lord, to give him an Evidence of his Divinity, ſalutes him at firſt Sight by Name, tells him what and who he was, both as to his Name, and Kindred, what Title ſhould be given him, that he ſhould be called *Cephas*, or *Peter*; a Name which he afterwards actually conferred upon him. What paſſed farther between them, and whether theſe two Brothers henceforward perſonally attended our Saviour's Motions in the Number of his Diſciples, the ſacred Story leaves us in the Dark. It ſeems probable, that they ſtaid with him for ſome Time, till they were inſtructed in the firſt Rudiments of his Doctrine, and by his Leave departed home. For it is reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that our Lord being unwilling, at this Time eſpecially, to awaken the Jealouſies of the State by a numerous Retinue, might diſmiſs his Diſciples for ſome Time, and *Peter* and *Andrew* amongſt the reſt, who hereupon returned home to the Exerciſe of their Calling, where he found them afterwards.

It was now ſomewhat more than a Year, ſince our Lord entered upon the publick Stage of Action, conſtantly *went about doing good, healing the Sick*,

and

and *preaching the Goſpel of the Kingdom*; reſiding uſually at *Capernaum*, and the Parts about it, where, by the Conſtancy of his Preaching, and the Reputation of his Miracles, his Fame ſpread about all thoſe Countries; by Means whereof Multitudes of People from all Parts flocked to him, greedily deſirous to become his Auditors. And what Wonder if the parched and barren Earth thirſted for the Showers of Heaven? It happened that our Lord retiring out of the City, to enjoy the Privacy of Contemplation upon the Banks of the Sea of *Galilee*, it was not long before the Multitude found him out; to avoid the Crowd and Preſs whereof, he ſtept into a Ship or Fiſher-boat, that lay near to the Shore, which belonged to *Peter*, who, together with his Companions, after a tedious and unſucceſsful Night, were gone aſhore to waſh and dry their Nets. He, who might have commanded, was yet pleaſed to intreat *Peter* (who by this Time was reurned into his Ship) to put a little from the Shore. Here being ſat, he taught the People, who ſtood along upon the Shore to hear him. Sermon ended, he reſolved to ſeal his Doctrine with a Miracle, that the People might be the more effectually convinced, that *he was a Teacher come from God.* To this Purpoſe, he bad *Simon* launch out farther, and caſt his Net into the Sea: *Simon* tells him, they had done it already, that they had been fiſhing all the laſt Night, but in vain; and if they could not ſuceed then (the moſt proper Seaſon for that Employment) there was leſs Hope to ſpeed now, it being probably about Noon. But becauſe where God commands, it is not for any to argue, but obey; at our Lord's Inſtance he let down the Net, which immediately incloſed ſo great a Multitude of Fiſhers, that the Net began to break, and they were forced to call to their Partners, who were in a Ship hard by them, to come in to their Aſſiſtance. A Draught ſo great, that it loaded both their Boats,

Boats, and that ſo full, that it endangered their ſinking before they could get ſafe to Shore: An Inſtance, wherein our Saviour gave an ocular Demonſtration, that, as *Meſſiah*, God had *put all Things under his Feet, not only Fowls of the Air, but the Fiſh of the Sea, and whatſoever paſſed through the Paths of the Seas.*

AMAZED they were all at this miraculous Draught of Fiſhes, wherupon *Simon*, in an Ecſtaſy of Admiration, and a Mixture of Humility and Fear, threw himſelf at the Feet of *Chriſt*, and prayed him to depart from him, as a vile and ſinful Perſon. So evident were the Appearances of Divinity in this Miracle, that he was overpowered and dazled with its Brightneſs and Luſtre, and reflecting upon himſelf, could not but think himſelf unworthy the Preſence of ſo great a Perſon, ſo immediately ſent from God; and conſidering his own State (Conſcience being hereby more ſenſibly awakened) was afraid that the Divine Vengeance might purſue and overtake him. But our Lord, to abate the Edge of his Fears, aſſures him, that this Miracle was not done to amaze and terrify him, but to ſtrengthen and confirm his Faith; that now he had nobler Work and Employment for him; inſtead of *catching Fiſh*, he ſhould, by perſuading Men to the Obedience of the Goſpel, *catch the Souls of Men:* And accordingly, commanded him and his Brother to follow him: (the ſame Command, which preſently after he gave to the two Sons of *Zebedee.*) The Word was no ſooner ſpoken, but they landed, and diſpoſing their Concerns in the Hands of Friends (as we may preſume prudent and reaſonable Men would) they immediately left all, and followed him; and from this Time *Peter* and the reſt became his conſtant and inſeparable Diſciples, living under the Rules of his Diſcipline and Inſtitutions.

FROM hence they returned to *Capernaum*, where our Lord entering into *Simon*'s Houſe (the Place, in all Likelihood, where he was wont to lodge during his Reſidence in that City) found his Mother-in-Law viſited with a violent Fever. No Privileges afford an Exemption from the ordinary Laws of human Nature; *Chriſt*, under her Roof, did not protect this Woman ftom the Aſſaults and Invaſions of a Fever. *Lord, behold, he whom thou loveſt is ſick*, as they ſaid concerning *Lazarus*. Here a freſh Opportunity offered itſelf to *Chriſt* of exerting his divine Power. No ſooner was he told of it, but he came to her Bed-ſide, rebuked the *Paroxyſms*, commanded the Fever to be gone, and taking her by the Hand to lift her up, in a Moment reſtored her to perfect Health, and Ability to return to the Buſineſs of of her Family; all Cures being equally eaſy to Omnipotence.

OUR Lord being now to elect ſome peculiar Perſons, as his immediate Vicegerents upon Earth, to whoſe Care and Truſt he might commit the building up his Church, and the planting that Religion in the World, for which he himſelf came down from Heaven; in order to it, he privately over-night withdrew himſelf into a ſolitary Mountain (commonly called *the Mount of Chriſt*, from his frequent repairing thither, though ſome of the Antients will have it to be Mount *Tabor*) there to make their ſolemn Addreſs to Heaven for a proſperous Succeſs on ſo great a Work. Herein leaving an excellent Copy and Precedent to the Governors of his Church, how to proceed in ſitting apart Perſons to ſo weighty and difficult an Employment. Upon this Mountain we may conceive there was an *Oratory* or Place of Prayer (probably intimated by St. *Luke*'s *Proſeucha*'s, or Houſes of Prayer; for ſuch, uſually uncovered, and ſtanding in the Fields, the *Jews* had in ſeveral Places) wherein our Lord continued all Night, not in one continued and intire Act of Devotion, but

probably

probably by Intervals and repeated Returns of Duty.

EARLY the next Morning his Diſciples came to him, out of whom he made Choice of Twelve to be his Apoſtles, that they might be the conſtant Attendants upon his Perſon, to hear his Diſcourſes and be Eye-witneſſes of his Miracles; to be always converſant with him while he was upon Earth, and afterwards to be ſent abroad up and down the World, to carry on that Work which he himſelf had begun; whom therefore he inveſted with the Power of working Miracles, which was more compleatly conferred upon them after his Aſcenſion into Heaven. Paſſing by the ſeveral Fancies and Conjectures of the Ancients, why our Saviour pitched upon the juſt Number of Twelve (whereof before) it may deſerve to be conſidered, whether our Lord, being now to appoint the ſupreme Officers and Governors of his Church, which the Apoſtle ſtyles, *the Commonwealth of* Iſrael, might not herein have a more peculiar Alluſion to the twelve Patriarchs, as Founders of their ſeveral Tribes, or to the conſtant Heads and Rulers of thoſe twelve Tribes of which the Body of the *Jewiſh* Nation did conſiſt: Eſpecially ſince he himſelf ſeems elſewhere to give Countenance to it, when he tells the Apoſtles, that *when the Son of Man ſhall ſit on the Throne of his Glory*, that is, be gone back to Heaven, and have taken full Poſſeſſion of his Evangelical Kingdom, which principally commenced from his Reſurrection: that then *they alſo ſhould ſit upon twelve Thrones, judging the twelve Tribes of* Iſrael; that is, they ſhould have great Powers and Authorities in the Church, ſuch as the Power of the Keys, and other Rights of ſpiritual Judicature and Sovereignty, anſwerable in ſome Proportion to the Power and Dignity which the Heads and Rulers of the twelve Tribes of *Iſrael* did enjoy.

IN the Enumeration of theſe twelve Apoſtles, all the Evangeliſts conſtantly place St. *Peter* in the

Front; and St. *Matthew* expreſly tells us, that he was the firſt, that is, he was the firſt that was called to be an Apoſtle: his Age alſo, and the Gravity of of his Perſon, more particularly qualifying him for a Primacy of Order amongſt the reſt of the Apoſtles, as that without which no Society of Men can be managed or maintained. Leſs than this, as none will deny him; ſo more than this, neither Scripture nor primitive Antiquity do allow him. And now it was, that our Lord actually conferred that Name upon him, which before he had promiſed him, *Simon* he ſurnamed *Peter*. It may here be enquired, when, and by whom the Apoſtles were baptized. That they were is unqueſtionable, being themſelves appointed to confer it upon others; but when, or how, the Scripture is altogether ſilent. *Nicephorus*, from no worſe an Author, as he pretends, than *Euodius*, St. *Peter*'s immediate Succeſſor to the See of *Antioch*, tells us, That of all the Apoſtles *Chriſt* baptized none but *Peter* with his own Hands; that *Peter* baptized *Andrew*, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, and they the reſt of the Apoſtles. This, if ſo, would greatly make for the Honour of St. *Peter*. But alas! his Authority is not only ſuſpicious, but ſuppoſititious, in a Manner deſerted by St. *Peter*'s beſt Friends, and the ſtrongeſt Champions of his Cauſe: *Baronius* himſelf, however ſometimes willing to make uſe of him, elſewhere confeſſing that this Epiſtle of *Euodius* is altogether unknown to any of the Ancients. As for the Teſtimony of *Clemens Alexandrinus*, which to the ſame Purpoſe he quotes out of *Sophronius*, (though not *Sophronius*, but *Johannes Moſchus*, as is notoriouſly known, is the Author of that Book) beſides, that it is delivered upon a uncertain Report, pretended to have been alledged in a Diſcourſe between one *Dionyſius* Biſhop of *Aſcalon* and his Clergy, out of a Book of *Clemens*, not now extant, his Authors are much alike, that is, of no great Value and Authority.

AMONGST

AMONGST theſe Apoſtles, our Lord choſe a Triumvirate, *Peter* and the two Sons of *Zebedee* to be his more intimate Companions, whom he admitted more familiarly than the reſt, unto all the more ſecret Paſſages and Tranſactions of his Life. The firſt Inſtance of which was on this Occaſion: *Jairus*, a Ruler of the Synagogue, had a Daughter deſperately ſick, whoſe Diſeaſe, having baffled all the Arts of Phyſick, was only curable by the immediate Agency of the God of Nature. He therefore in all Humility addreſſes himſelf to our Saviour; which he had no ſooner done, but Servants came Poſt to tell him, that it was in vain to trouble our Lord, for that his Daughter was dead. *Chriſt* bids him not deſpond, if his Faith held out, there was no Danger. And ſuffering none to follow him, but *Peter*, *James* and *John*, goes along with him to the Houſe; where he was derided by the ſorrowful Friends and Neighbours, for telling them, that ſhe was not perfectly dead. But our Lord entering in, with the commanding Efficacy of two Words, reſtored her at once both to Life and perfect Health.

OUR Lord after this preached many Sermons, and wrought many Miracles; amongſt which, none more remarkable, than his feeding a Multitude of five thouſand Men, beſides Women and Children, but with five Loaves and two Fiſhes; of which, nevertheleſs, twelve Baſkets of Fragments were taken up. Which being done, and the Multitude diſmiſſed, he commanded the Apoſtles to take Ship, it being now near Night, and to croſs over to *Capernaum*, whilſt he himſelf, as his Manner was, retired to a neighbouring Mountain, to diſpoſe himſelf to Prayer and Contemplation. The Apoſtles were ſcarce got into the middle of the Sea, when on a Sudden a violent Storm and Tempeſt began to ariſe, whereby they were brought into preſent Danger of their Lives. Our Saviour, who knew how the Caſe ſtood with them, and how much they laboured under infinite

infinite Pains and Fears, having himſelf cauſed this Tempeſt, for the greater Trial of their Faith, a little before Morning (for ſo long they remained in this imminent Danger) immediately conveyed himſelf upon the Sea, where the Waves received him, being proud to carry their Maſter. He who refuſed to gratify the Devil, when tempting him to throw himſelf down from the Pinacle of the Temple, did here commit himſelf to a boiſterous and inſtable Element, and that in a violent Storm, walking upon the Water, as if it had been dry Ground. But that infinite Power that made and ſupports the World, as it gave Rule to all particular Beings, ſo can when it pleaſeth countermand the Laws of their Creation, and make them act contrary to their natural Inclinations. If God ſays the Word, the Sun will ſtand ſtill in the middle of the Heavens; if, Go back, it will retroceed, as upon the Dial of *Abaz*: If he command it, the Heavens will become as Braſs, and the Earth as Iron, and that for three Years and a half together, as in the Caſe of *Elijah*'s Prayer; if he ſay to the Sea, Divide, 'twill run upon Heaps, and become on both Sides as firm as a Wall of Marble. Nothing can be more natural, than for the Fire to burn, and yet at God's Command it will forget its Nature, and become a Skreen and a Fence to the three Children in the *Babylonian* Furnace. What heavier than Iron, or more natural than for Gravity to tend downwards? and yet when God will have it, Iron ſhall float like Cork on the Top of the Water. The proud and raging Sea that naturally refuſes to bear the Bodies of Men while alive, became here as firm as Braſs, when commanded to wait upon, and do Homage to the God of Nature. Our Lord walking towards the Ship, as if he had an Intention to paſs by it, he was eſpied by them, who preſently thought it to be the Apparition of a Spirit. Hereupon they were ſeized with great Terrour and Conſternation; and their

Fears,

Fears, in all Likelihood, heightened by the vulgar Opinion, that they were evil Spirits that chuſe rather to appear in the Night than by Day. While they were in this Agony, our Lord taking Compaſſion on them calls to them, and bids them not be afraid, for that it was no other than himſelf. *Peter* (the Eagerneſs of whoſe Temper carried him forward to all bold and reſolute Undertakings) entreated our Lord, that if it was he, he might have Leave to come upon the Water to him. Having received his Orders, he went out of the Ship, and walked upon the Sea, to meet his Maſter. But when he found the Wind to bear hard againſt him, and the Waves to riſe round about him, whereby probably the Sight of *Chriſt* was intercepted, he began to be afraid; and the higher his Fears aroſe, the lower his Faith began to ſink, and together with that, his Body to ſink under Water; whereupon, in a paſſionate Fright, he cried out to our Lord to help him, who, reaching out his Arm, took him by the Hand, and ſet him again upon the Top of the Water, with this gentle Reproof, *O thou of little Faith, wherefore didſt thou doubt?* It being the Weakneſs of our Faith that makes the Influences of the Divine Power and Goodneſs to have no better Effect upon us. Being come to the Ship, they took them in, where our Lord no ſooner arrived, but the Wind and Waves obſerving their Duty to their Sovereign Lord, and having done the Errand which they came upon, mannerly departed, and vaniſhed away, and the Ship in an Inſtant was at the Shore. All that were in the Ship being ſtrangely aſtoniſhed at this Miracle, and fully convinced of the Divinity of his Perſon, came and did Homage to him, with this Confeſſion, *Of a Truth thou art the Son of God.* After which they went aſhore, and landed in the Country of *Genezareth*, and there more fully acknowledged him before all the People.

THE

THE next Day, great Multitudes flocking after him, he entered into a Synagogue at *Capernaum*, and taking Occaſion from the late Miracle of the Loaves, which he had wrought amongſt them, he began to diſcourſe concerning himſelf, as the *true Manna*, and the *Bread that came down from Heaven*; largely opening to them many of the moſt ſublime and ſpiritual Myſteries, and the neceſſary and important Duties of the Goſpel. Hereupon a great Part of his Auditory, who had hitherto followed him, finding their Underſtandings gravelled with theſe difficult and uncommon Notions, and that the Duties he required were likely to grate hard upon them, and perceiving now that he was not the *Meſſiah* they took him for, whoſe Kingdom ſhould conſiſt in an external Grandeur and Plenty, but was to be managed and tranſacted in a more inward and ſpiritual Way; hereupon fairly left him in open Field, and henceforth quite turned their Backs upon him. Whereupon our Lord, turning about to his Apoſtles, aſked them, whether *they alſo would go away from him? Peter* (Spokes-man general for all the reſt) anſwered, whither ſhould they go to mend and better their Condition? ſhould they return back to *Moſes!* Alas! he *laid a Yoke upon them, which neither they nor their Fathers were able to bear.* Should they go to the *Scribes* and *Phariſees*, they would feed them with Stones inſtead of Bread, obtrude human Traditions upon them, for divine Dictates and Commands: Should they betake themſelves to the Philoſophers amongſt the *Gentiles*, they were miſerably blind and ſhort-ſighted in their Notions of Things, and their Sentiments and Opinions not only different from, but contrary to, one another; no, 'twas *he only that had the Words of eternal Life*, whoſe Doctrine could inſtruct them in the plain Way to Heaven; that they had fully aſſented to what both *John* and he had ſaid concerning himſelf, that they were fully perſuaded both from the Efficacy of his Sermons,

Sermons, which they had heard, and the powerful Conviction of his Miracles which they had ſeen; that he was *the Son of the Living God*, the true *Meſſiah* and Saviour of the World. But notwithſtanding this fair and plauſible Teſtimony, he tells them, that they were not all of this Mind; that there was a *Satan* amongſt them; one that was moved by the Spirit and Impulſe, and that acted according to the Rules and Intereſt of the *Devil:* intimating *Judas*, who ſhould betray him. So hard is it to meet with a Body of ſo juſt and pure a Conſtitution, wherein ſome rotten Member, or diſtempered Part is not to be found.

It was ſome Time ſince our Saviour had kept his third *Paſſover* at *Jeruſalem*, when he directed his Journey towards *Cæſarea Philippi*; where, by the Way, having, like a careful Maſter of his Family, firſt prayed with his Apoſtles, he began to aſk them (having been more than two Years publickly converſant among them) what the World thought concerning him. They anſwered, that the Opinions of Men, about him, were various and different; that ſome took him for *John the Baptiſt*, lately riſen from the Dead, between whoſe Doctrine, Diſcipline, and Way of Life, in the main, there was ſo great a Correſpondence: That others thought he was *Elias*; probably judging ſo from the Gravity of his Perſon, Freedom of his Preaching, the Fame and Reputation of his Miracles, eſpecially ſince the Scriptures aſſured them he was not dead, but gone up into Heaven, and had ſo expreſly foretold, that he ſhould return back again: That others looked upon him as the Prophet *Jeremiah* alive again, of whoſe Return the *Jews* had great Expectations; inſomuch, that ſome of them thought the Soul of *Jeremiah* was re-inſpired into *Zacharias:* Or, if not thus, at leaſt that he was one of the moſt eminent of the antient *Prophets*, or that the Souls of theſe Perſons had been breathed into him; the Doctrine of the Tranſ-

migration of the Souls, firſt broached and propagated by *Pythagoras*, being at this Time current amongſt the *Jews*, and owned by the *Phariſees* as one of their prime Notions and Principles.

THIS Account not ſufficing, our Lord comes cloſer and nearer to them, and tells them, It was no Wonder if the People were divided into theſe wild Thoughts concerning him; but ſince they had been always with him, had been Hearers of his Sermons, and Spectators of his Miracles, he enquired, what they themſelves thought of him. *Peter*, ever forward to return an Anſwer, and therefore by the Fathers frequently ſtiled, *The Mouth of the Apoſtles*, told him, in the Name of the reſt, That he was the *Meſſiah*, the *Son of the Living God*, promiſed of old in the Law and the Prophets, heartily deſired and looked for by all good Men, anointed and ſet apart by God to be the King, Prieſt and Prophet of his People. To this excellent and comprehenſive Confeſſion of St. *Peter*'s, our Lord returns this great Eulogium and Commendation; *Bleſſed art thou*, Simon Bar Jonah, *Fleſh and Blood hath not revealed it it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven*: That is, this Faith which thou haſt now confeſſed, is not human, contrived by Man's Wit, or built upon his Teſtimony, but upon thoſe Notions and Principles which I was ſent by God to reveal to the World, and thoſe mighty and ſolemn Atteſtations which he has given from Heaven, to the Truth both of my Perſon, and my Doctrine. And becauſe thou haſt ſo freely made this Confeſſion, therefore *I alſo ſay unto thee, that thou art* Peter, *and upon this Rock I will build my Church, and the Gates of Hell ſhall not prevail againſt it*: That is, that as thy Name ſignifies a *Stone* or *Rock*, ſuch ſhalt thou thyſelf be, firm, ſolid and immoveable, in building of the Church, which ſhall be orderly erected, by thy Care and Diligence, and ſo firmly founded upon that Faith which thou haſt now confeſſed, that all

all the Aſſaults and Attempts which the Powers of Hell can make againſt it, ſhall not be able to overturn it. Moreover, *I will give unto thee the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven, and whatſoever thou ſhalt looſe on Earth, ſhall be looſed in Heaven:* That is, thou ſhalt have that Authority and Power within the Church, whereby, as with Keys, thou ſhalt be able to ſhut and lock out obſtinate and impenitent Sinners, and upon their Repentance to unlock the Door, and take them in again: And what thou ſhalt thus regularly do, ſhall be owned in the Court above, and ratified by God in Heaven.

Upon theſe ſeveral Paſſages, the Champions of the Church of *Rome*, mainly build the unlimited Supremacy and Infallibility of the Biſhops of that See: with how much Truth, and how little Reaſon it is not my preſent Purpoſe to diſcuſs. It may ſuffice here to remark, that though this Place does very much tend to exalt the Honour of St. *Peter*, yet is there nothing herein perſonal and peculiar to him alone, as diſtinct from, and preferred above the reſt of the Apoſtles. Does he here make Confeſſion of *Chriſt*'s being the Son of God? Yet, beſides that herein he ſpake but the Senſe of all the reſt, this was no more than what others had ſaid, as well as he, yea, before he was ſo much as called to be a Diſciple. Thus *Nathanael*, at his firſt coming to *Chriſt*, expreſly told him, *Thou art the Son of God, thou art the King of* Iſrael. Does our Lord here ſtyle him a Rock? All the Apoſtles are elſewhere equally called *Foundations*, yea, ſaid to be the *Twelve Foundations upon which the Wall of the* New Jeruſalem, that is, the evangelical Church is erected; and ſometimes others of them, beſides *Peter*, are called Pillars, as they have Relation to the Church already built. Does *Chriſt* here promiſe the Keys to *Peter?* That is, the Power of governing and exerciſing Church Cenſures, and of abſolving penitent Sinners: The very ſame

is elſewhere promiſed to all the Apoſtles, and almoſt in the very ſame Terms and Words, *If thine offending Brother prove obſtinate, tell it unto the Church; but, if he neglect to hear the Church, let him be unto thee as an Heathen and a Publican. Verily, I ſay unto you, whatſoever ye ſhall bind on Earth, ſhall be bound in Heaven.* And elſewhere, when ready to leave the World, he tells them, *As my Father hath ſent me, even ſo ſend I you: Whoſeſoever Sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whoſeſoever Sins ye retain, they are retained.* By all which it is evident, that our Lord did not here give any perſonal Prerogative to St. *Peter*, as univerſal Paſtor and Head of the Chriſtian Church, much leſs to thoſe who were to be his Succeſſors in the See of *Rome*; but as he made this Confeſſion in the Name of the reſt of the Apoſtles, ſo what was here promiſed unto him, was equally intended unto all. Nor did the more conſidering and judicious Part of the Fathers (however giving a mighty Reverence to St. *Peter*) ever underſtand it in any other Senſe. Sure I am that *Origen* tells us, that every true *Chriſtian* that makes this Confeſſion with the ſame Spirit and Integrity which St. *Peter* did, ſhall have the ſame Bleſſing and Commendation from *Chriſt* conferred upon him.

THE holy *Jeſus*, knowing the Time of his Paſſion to draw on, began to prepare the Minds of his Apoſtles againſt that fatal Hour; telling them what hard and bitter Things he ſhould ſuffer at *Jeruſalem*, what Affronts and Indignities he muſt undergo, and be at laſt put to Death with all the Arts of Torture and Diſgrace, by the Decree of the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*. *Peter*, whom our Lord had infinitely encouraged and endeared to him, by the great Things which he had lately ſaid concerning him, ſo that his Spirits were now afloat, and his Paſſions ready to over-run the Banks, not able to endure a Thought that ſo much Evil ſhould befal his Maſter, broke

out

out into an over-confident and unſeaſonable Interruption of him; *He took him, and began to rebuke him, ſaying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this ſhall not be unto thee.* Beſides his great Kindneſs and Affection to his Maſter, the Minds of the Apoſtles were not yet thoroughly purged from the Hopes or Expectations of a glorious Reign of the *Meſſiah*; ſo that *Peter* could not but look upon theſe Sufferings as unbecoming and inconſiſtent with the State and Dignity of the Son of God; and therefore thought good to adviſe his Lord to take care of himſelf, and, while there was Time to prevent and avoid them. This our Lord, who valued the Redemption of Mankind infinitely before his own Eaſe and Safety, reſented at ſo high a Rate, that he returned upon him with this ſharp and ſtinging Reproof, *Get thee behind me Satan:* The very ſame Treatment which he once gave to the Devil himſelf, when he made that inſolent Propoſal to him, *To fall down and worſhip him*; though in *Satan* it was the Reſult of pure Malice and Hatred; in *Peter* only an Error of Love and great Regard. However, our Lord could not but look upon it as a miſchievous and diabolical Counſel, prompted and promoted by the great Adverſary of Mankind. Away therefore, ſays *Chriſt*, with thy helliſh and pernicious Counſel, *Thou art an Offence unto me*, in ſeeking to oppoſe and undermine that great Deſign, for which I purpoſely came down from Heaven: In this *thou ſavoureſt not the Things of God, but thoſe that be of Men*, in ſuggeſting to me thoſe little Shifts and Arts of Safety and Self-Preſervation, which human Prudence, and the Love of Mens ownſelves are wont to dictate to them. By which, though we may learn *Peter*'s mighty Kindneſs to our Saviour, yet that therein he did not take his Meaſures right. A plain Evidence that his Infallibility had not yet taken Place.

About

About a Week after this, our Saviour being to receive a Type and Specimen of his future Glorification, took with him his three moſt intimate Apoſtles, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, and went up into a very high Mountain, which the Antients generally conceive to have been Mount *Tabor*, a round and very high Mountain, ſituate in the Plains of *Galilee*. And now was even literally fulfilled what the *Pſalmiſt* had ſpoken, Tabor *and* Hermon *ſhall rejoice in thy Name*; for what greater Joy and Triumph, than to be peculiarly choſen to be the holy Mount, whereon our Lord, in ſo eminent a Manner, *received from God the Father, Honour and Glory*, and made ſuch magnificent Diſplays of his divine Power and Majeſty? For while they were here earneſtly employed in Prayer, (as ſeldom did our Lord enter upon any eminent Actions, but he firſt made his Addreſs to Heaven) he was ſuddenly transformed into another Manner of Appearance, ſuch a Luſtre and Radiancy darted from his Face, that the Sun itſelf ſhines not brighter at Noon-day; ſuch Beams of Light reflected from his Garments, as out-did the Light itſelf that was round about them, ſo exceeding pure and white, that the Snow might bluſh to compare with it; nor could the Fuller's Art purify any Thing into Half that Whiteneſs: An evident and ſenſible Repreſentation of the Glory of that State, wherein the *Juſt* ſhall *walk in White*, and *ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of the Father*. During this heavenly Scene, there appeared *Moſes* and *Elias*, (who, as the *Jews* ſay, ſhall come together) clothed with all the Brightneſs and Majeſty of a glorified State, familiarly converſing of the Death and Sufferings which he was ſhortly to undergo, and his Departure into Heaven. Behold here together the three greateſt Perſons that ever were the Miniſters of Heaven: *Moſes*, under God, the Inſtitutor and Promulgator of their Law; *Elias*, the great Reformer of it, when under its deepeſt Degeneracy and Corruption,

tion; and the bleſſed *Jeſus*, the Son of God, who came to take away what was weak and imperfect, and to introduce a more manly and rational Inſtitution; and to communicate the laſt Revelation which God would make of his Mind to the World. *Peter* and the two Apoſtles that were with him, were in the mean Time fallen aſleep, heavy through Want of natural Reſt, (it being probably Night when this was done) or elſe overpowered with theſe extraordinary Appearances, which Frailty and Weakneſs of their preſent State could not bear, were fallen into a Trance. But now awaking, were ſtrangely ſurprized to behold our Lord ſurrounded with ſo much Glory, and thoſe two great Perſons converſing with him, knowing who they were, probably by ſome paaticular Marks and Signatures that were upon them, or elſe ſome immediate Revelation, or from the Diſcourſe which paſſed betwixt *Chriſt* and them, or poſſibly from ſome Communication which they themſelves might have with them. While theſe heavenly Gueſts were about to depart, *Peter*, in a great Rapture and Ecſtaſy of Mind, addreſſed himſelf to our Saviour, telling him how infinitely they were pleaſed and delighted with their being there; and to that Purpoſe deſiring his Leave, that they might erect three Tabernacles, one for him, one for *Moſes*, and one for *Elias*. While he was thus ſaying, a bright Cloud ſuddenly over-ſhadowed the two great Miniſters, and wrapt them up; out of which came a Voice, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleaſed, hear ye him*; which, when the Apoſtles heard, and ſaw the Cloud coming over themſelves, were ſeized with a great Conſternation, and fell upon their Faces to the Ground; whom our Lord gently touched, bad them ariſe and diſband their Fears: whereupon looking up, they ſaw none but their Maſter, the reſt having vaniſhed and diſappeared. In Memory of theſe great Tranſactions, *Bede* tells us, that in Purſuance of St. *Peter*'s Petition about

about the three Tabernacles, were afterwards three Churches built upon the Top of this Mountain, which, in After-times were had in great Veneration, which, might poſſibly give ſome Foundation to that Report which one makes, that in his Time there were ſhewed the Ruins of thoſe three Tabernacles, which were built according to St. *Peter*'s Deſire.

AFTER this, our Lord and his Apoſtles, having travelled through *Galilee*, the Gatherers of the Tribute-Money came to *Peter*, and aſked him, whether his Maſter was not obliged to pay the Tribute, which God under the *Moſaic* Law, commanded to be yearly paid by every *Jew* above twenty Years old, to the Uſe of the Temple, which ſo continued to the Times of *Veſpaſian*, under whom the Temple being deſtroyed, it was by him transferred to the Uſe of the *Capitol* at *Rome*, being to the Value of half a Shekel, or Fifteen-pence of our Money. To this Queſtion of theirs *Peter* poſitively anſwers, yes; knowing his Maſter would never be backward, either to *give unto* Cæſar *the Things that be* Cæſar's, *or to God the Things that are God's*. *Peter* going into the Houſe, to give an Account to his Maſter, and to know his Mind concerning it, *Chriſt* prevented him with this Queſtion, *What thinkeſt thou* Simon, *of whom do earthly Kings exact Tribute*, of their own Children and Family, or from other People? *Peter* anſwered, Not from their own Servants and Family, but from Strangers. To which our Lord preſently replied, That then, according to his own Argument and Opinion, both he himſelf, as being the Son of God, and they whom he had taken to be his menial and domeſtick Servants, were free from this Tax of Head-Money, yearly to be paid to God. But rather than give Offence, by ſeeming to deſpiſe the Temple, and to undervalue that Authority that had ſettled the Tribute, he reſolves to put himſelf at the Expence and Charge of a Miracle; and therefore commanded *Peter* to go to Sea,

Sea, and take up the firſt Fiſh which came to his Hook, in whoſe Mouth he ſhould find a Piece of Money, (a *Stater*, in Value a Shekel, or Half-a-Crown,) which he took and gave to the Collectors, both for his Maſter and himſelf.

Our Lord after this, diſcourſing to them, how to carry themſelves towards their offending Brethren; *Peter* being deſirous to be more particularly informed in this Matter aſked our Saviour, How oft a Man was obliged to forgive his Brother, in caſe of Offence and Treſpaſs, whether ſeven Times were not enough? He told him, that upon his Neighbour's Repentance, he was not only bound to do it ſeven times, but until ſeventy times ſeven; that is, he muſt be indulgent to him, as oft as the Offender returns and begs it, and heartily profeſſes his Sorrow and Repentance. Which he farther illuſtrates by a plain and excellent Parable, and thence draws this Concluſion, that the ſame Meaſures, either of Compaſſion or Cruelty, which Men ſhew to their fellow Brethren, they themſelves ſhall meet with at at the Hands of God, the ſupreme Ruler and Juſticiary of the World. It was not long after, when a briſk young Man addreſſed himſelf to our Saviour, to know of him, by what Methods he might beſt attain Eternal Life. Our Lord, to humble his Confidence, bad him *ſell his Eſtate, and give it to the Poor*; and, putting himſelf under his Diſcipline, he ſhould have a much better *Treaſure in Heaven.* The Man was rich, and liked not the Counſel, nor was he willing to purchaſe Happineſs at ſuch a Rate; and accordingly went away under great Sorrow and Diſcontent. Upon which *Chriſt* takes Occaſion to let them know, how hardly thoſe Men would get to Heaven, who built their Comfort and Happineſs upon the Plenty and Abundance of theſe outward Things. *Peter*, taking hold of this Opportunity, aſked, What Return they themſelves ſhould have, who had quitted and renounced whatever they

had for his Sake and Service? Our Saviour anſwers, That no Man ſhould be Loſer by his Service; that for their Parts, they ſhould be recompenced with far greater Privileges; and that whoever ſhould forſake Houſes or Lands, Kindred and Relations, out of Love to him and his Religion, ſhould enjoy them again with infinite Advantages in this World, if conſiſtent with the Circumſtances of their State, and thoſe Troubles and Perſecutions which would neceſſarily ariſe from the Profeſſion of the Goſpel; however, they ſhould have what would make infinite Amends for all; *Eternal Life in the other World.*

Our Saviour, in order to his laſt fatal Journey to *Jeruſalem*, that he might the better comply with the Prophecy that went before him, ſent two of his Apoſtles, who, in all Probability were *Peter* and *John*, with an authoritative Commiſſion to fetch him an Aſs to ride on, (he had none of his own; he who *was rich, for our Sakes, made himſelf poor*; he lived upon Charity all his Life, had neither an Aſs to ride on, nor an Houſe where to lay his Head, no, nor after his Death, a Tomb to lie in, but what the Charity of others provided for him) whereon being mounted, and attended with the Acclamations of the People, he ſet forward on his Journey; wherein there appears an admirable Mixture of Humility and Majeſty: The Aſs he rode on became the Meanneſs and Meekneſs of a Prophet; but his arbitrary Commiſſion for the fetching it, and the ready Obedience of its Owners, ſpake the Prerogative of a King; the Palms born before him, the Garments ſtrewed in his Way, and the joyful Hoſannahs and Acclamations of the People, proclaim at once, both the Majeſty of a Prince and the Triumph of a Saviour. For ſuch Expreſſions of Joy we find were uſual in publick and feſtival Solemnities. Thus a Hiſtorian, deſcribing the Emperor *Commodus* his triumphant Return to *Rome*, tells us, that

that the Senate and whole People of *Rome*, to testify their mighty Kindness and Veneration for him, came out of the City to meet him, carrying Palms and Laurels along with them, and throwing about all Sorts of Flowers that were then in Season. In this Manner our Lord being entered the City, he soon after retired to *Bethany*, whence he dispatched *Peter* and *John*, to make Preparation for the *Passover*, giving them Instructions where he would have it kept. Accordingly they found the Person he had described to them, whom they followed home to his House. Whether this was the House of *John the Evangelist*, (as *Nicephorus* tells us) situate near Mount *Sion*, or of *Simon the Leper*, or of *Nicodemus*, or of *Joseph of Arimathea*, as others severally conjecture; seeing none of the *Evangelists* have thought fit to tell us, it may not become us curiously to enquire.

All Things being now prepared, our Saviour, with his Apostles, came down for the Celebration of the *Passover*. And being entered into the House, they orderly took their Places. Our Lord, who had always taught them by his Practice, no less than by his Doctrine, did not particularly design to teach them Humility and Charity, by his own Example. And that the Instance might be the greater, he underwent the meanest Offices of the Ministry; towards the End therefore of the Paschal Supper, he arose from the Table, and laying aside his upper Garment (which, according to the Fashion of those Eastern Countries, being long, was unfit for Action) and himself taking a Towel, and pouring Water into a Bason, he began to wash all the Apostles Feet, not disdaining those of *Judas* himself. Coming to *Peter*, he would by no Means admit any Instance of so much Condescension. What, the Master do this to the Servant; the Son of God to so vile a Sinner? This made him a second Time refuse it, *Thou shalt never wash my Feet*. But our Lord soon corrects

his imprudent Modeſty, by telling him, That *if he waſhed him not, he could have no Part with him*; inſinuating the Myſtery of this Action, which was to denote Remiſſion of Sin, and the purifying Virtue of the Spirit of *Chriſt* to be poured upon all true *Chriſtians*. *Peter*, ſatisfied with the Anſwer, ſoon altered his Reſolution, *Lord, not my Feet only, but alſo my Hands and my Head.* If the Caſe be ſo, let me be waſhed all over, rather than come ſhort of my Portion in thee. This being done, he returned again to the Table, and acquainted them with the Meaning and Tendency of this myſtical Action, and what Force it ought to have upon them towards one another. The Waſhing itſelf denotes their inward and ſpiritual Cleanſing by the Blood and Spirit of *Chriſt*, ſymbolically typified and repreſented by all the Waſhings and Baptiſms of the *Moſaic* Inſtitution; the waſhing of the Feet reſpected our intire Sanctification of our whole Spirit, Soul and Body, no Part being to be left impure. And then, that all this ſhould be done by ſo great a Perſon (their Lord and Maſter) preached to their Senſes a Sermon of the greateſt Humility and Condeſcenſion, and taught them how little Reaſon they had to boggle at the meaneſt Offices of Kindneſs and Charity towards others, when he himſelf had ſtooped to ſo low an Abaſure towards them. And now he began more immediately to reflect upon his Sufferings, and upon him who was to be the Occaſion of them; telling them that one of them would be the Traitor to betray him. Hereat they were ſtrangely troubled, and every one began to ſuſpect himſelf, till *Peter* (whoſe Love and Care for his Maſter, commonly made him ſtart ſooner than the reſt) made Signs to St. *John*, who lay in our Saviour's Boſom, to aſk him particularly who it was? Which our Saviour preſently did, by making them underſtand that it was *Judas Iſcariot*, who not long after left the Company.

And now our Lord began the Inſtitution of his Supper, that ſolemn Inſtitution which he was reſolved to leave behind him, to be conſtantly celebrated in all Ages of the Church, as the ſtanding Monument of his Love in dying for Mankind. For now he told them, that he himſelf muſt leave them, and that *whither he went they could not come. Peter*, not well underſtanding what he meant, aſked him whither it was he was going? Our Lord replied, It was to that Place whither he could not follow him; but that he ſhould do it afterwards: Intimating the Martyrdom he was to undergo for the Sake of *Chriſt*. To which *Peter* anſwered, that he knew no Reaſon why he might not follow, ſeeing that if it was even to the laying down of his Life for his Sake, he was moſt ready and reſolved to do it. Our Lord liked not his over-confident Preſumption, and therefore told him, they were great Things which he promiſed, but that he took not the true Meaſures of his own Strength, nor eſpied the Snares and Deſigns of Satan, who deſired no better Occaſion than this, to ſift and winnow him: But that he had prayed to Heaven for him, *That his Faith might not fail*; by which Means being ſtrengthened himſelf, he ſhould be obliged to ſtrenghthen and confirm his Brethren. And, whereas he ſo confidently aſſured him that he was ready to go along with him, not only into Priſon, but even to Death itſelf; our Lord plainly told him, that notwithſtanding all his confident and generous Reſolutions, before *the Cock crowed thrice*; that is, before three of the Clock in the Morning, he would that very Night three ſeveral Times deny his Maſter. With which Anſwer our Lord wiſely rebuked his Confidence, and taught him (had he underſtood the Leſſon) not to truſt to his own Strength, but intirely to depend upon him, who is able to keep us from falling. Withal inſinuating, that though by his Sin he would juſtly forfeit the divine Grace and Favour, yet,

yet, upon his Repentance, he ſhould be reſtored to the Honour of the Apoſtolate, as a certain Evidence of the divine Goodneſs and Indulgence to him.

HAVING ſung an Hymn, and concluded the whole Affair, he left the Houſe where all theſe Things had been tranſacted, and went with his Apoſtles unto the *Mount of Olives*, where again he put them in mind how much they would be offended at thoſe Things which he was now about to ſuffer; and *Peter* again renewed his reſolute and undaunted Promiſe of ſuffering and dying with him; yea, out of an exceſſive Confidence told him, that *though all the reſt ſhould forſake and deny him, yet would not he deny him.* How far will Zeal and an indiſcreet Affection tranſport even a good Man into Vanity and Preſumption! *Peter* queſtions others, but never doubts himſelf. So natural is Self-Love, ſo apt are we to take the faireſt Meaſures of ourſelves. Nay, though our Lord had but a little before, once and again reproved this vain Humour, yet does he ſtill, not only perſiſt, but grow up in it. So hardly are we to eſpy our Faults or to be ſo thoroughly convinced of them, as to correct and reform them. This Confidence of his inſpired all the reſt with a mighty Courage, all the Apoſtles likewiſe aſſuring him of their conſtant and unſhaken adhering to him; but our Lord returned the ſame Anſwer to *Peter*, which he had done before. From hence they went down into the Village of *Gethſemane*, where, leaving the reſt of the Apoſtles, he, accompanied with none but *Peter*, *James* and *John*, retired into a neighbouring Garden, (whither, *Euſebius* tells us, *Chriſtians*, even in his Time, were wont to come ſolemnly to offer up their Prayers to Heaven, and where as the *Arabian* Geographer informs us, a fair and ſtately Church was built to the Honour of the *Virigin Mary*) to enter upon the Ante-ſcene of the fatal Tragedy that was now approaching; it bearing a very

a very fit Proportion (as ſome of the Fathers have obſerved) that as the *firſt Adam* fell and ruined Mankind in a *Garden*, ſo a *Garden* ſhould be the Place where the *ſecond Adam* ſhould begin his Paſſion, in order to the Redemption of the World. Gardens, which, to us are Places of Repoſe and Pleaſure, and Scenes of Divertiſement and Delight, were to our Lord a School of Temptation, a Theatre of great Horrors and Sufferings, and the firſt Approaches of the Hour of Darkneſs.

HERE it was that the bleſſed *Jeſus* laboured under the bittereſt Agony that could fall upon humane Nature, which the holy Story deſcribes by Words ſufficiently expreſſive of the higheſt Grief and Sorrow; he was *afraid*, *ſorrowful*, and *very heavy*, yea, *his Soul was exceeding ſorrowful*, and that *even unto Death*, he was *ſore amazed*, *and very heavy*, he was *troubled*, his Soul was ſhaken with vehement Commotions; yea, he was in an *Agony*, a Word by which the *Greeks* were wont to repreſent the greateſt Conflicts and Anxieties. The Effect of all which was, that *he pray'd more earneſtly*, offered up *Prayers and Supplications with ſtrong Cries and Tears*, as the Apoſtle expounds it, and ſweat, *as it were*, *great Drops of Blood falling to the Ground*. What this bloody Sweat was, and how far natural or extraordinary, I am not concerned to enquire. Certain it is, it was a plain Evidence of the moſt intenſe Grief and Sadneſs: For if an extreme Fear or Trouble will many Times caſt us into a cold Sweat, how great muſt be the Commotion and Conflict of our Saviour's Mind, which could force open the Pores of his Body, locked up by the Coldneſs of the Night, and make not Drops of Sweat, but great Drops, or (as the *Greek* Word ſignifies) *Clods* of Blood to iſſue from them. While our Lord was thus contending with theſe Ante-paſſions, the three Apoſtles ſlept, when he had made three ſeveral Addreſſes unto Heaven, that, if it might conſiſt with

his

his Father's Will, this bitter *Cup might paſs from him*, (expreſſing herein the harmleſs and innocent Deſires of humane Nature, which always ſtudies its own Preſervation) between each of them came to viſit the Apoſtles, and calling to *Peter*, aſked him, *Whether they could not watch with him one Hour?* adviſing them *to watch and pray, that they entered not into Temptation*; adding this Argument, that *the Spirit indeed was willing, but that the Fleſh was weak*, and that therefore there was the more Need that they ſhould ſtand upon their Guard. Obſerve here the incomparable Sweetneſs, the generous Candour of our bleſſed Saviour, to paſs ſo charitable a Cenſure upon an Action, from whence Malice and Ill-nature might have drawn Monſters and Prodigies, and have repreſented it black as the Shades of Darkneſs. The Requeſt which our Lord made to theſe Apoſtles, was infinitely reaſonable, to watch with him in his bitter Agony, their Company at leaſt being ſome Refreſhment to one, under ſuch ſad and fatal Circumſtances; and this but for a little Time, one Hour, it would ſoon be over, and then they might freely conſult their own Eaſe and Safety: 'Twas their dear Lord and Maſter whom they were now to attend upon, ready to lay down his Life for them, ſweating already under the firſt Skirmiſhes of his Sufferings, and expecting every Moment when all the Powers of Darkneſs would fall upon him. But all theſe Conſiderations were drowned in a profound Security, the Men were faſt aſleep, and though often awakened and told of it, regarded it not; as if nothing but Eaſe and Softneſs had been then to be dreamed of: An Action that looked like the moſt prodigious Ingratitude, and the higheſt Unconcernedneſs for their Lord and Maſter, and which, one would have thought had argued a very great Coldneſs and Indifferency of Affection towards him. But he would not ſet it upon the Tenters, nor ſtretched it to what it might eaſily have been drawn to; he imputes

imputes it not to their Unthankfulneſs, or Want of Affection, nor to their Carleſneſs of what became of him, but merely to their Infirmity and the Weakneſs of their bodily Temper, himſelf making the Excuſe, when they could make none for themſelves; *the Spirit indeed is willing, but the Fleſh is weak:* Hereby teaching us, to put the moſt candid and favourable Conſtructions upon thoſe Actions of others, which are capable of various Interpretations, and rather with the Bee to ſuck Honey, than with the Spider to draw Poiſon from them. His laſt Prayer being ended, he came to them, and told them, with a gentle Rebuke, That now they might *ſleep on*, if they pleaſed, that *the Hour was at Hand that he ſhould be betrayed, and delivered into the Hands of Men.*

While he was thus diſcourſing to them, a Band of Soldiers, ſent from the High-prieſts, with the Traitor *Judas* to conduct and direct them, ruſhed into the Garden, and ſeized upon him; which, when the Apoſtles ſaw, they aſked him whether they ſhould attempt his Reſcue. *Peter* (whoſe ungovernable Zeal put him upon all dangerous Undertakings) without ſtaying for an Anſwer, drew his Sword, and eſpying one more buſy than the reſt, in laying hold upon our Saviour, which was *Malchus* (who, though carrying Kingſhip in his Name, was but a Servant to the High-prieſt) ſtruck at him, with an Intention to diſpatch him; but God over-ruling the Stroke, it only cut off his Right-Ear. Our Lord liked not this wild and unwarrantable Zeal, and therefore intreated their Patience, whilſt he miraculouſly healed the Wound. And turning to *Peter*, bad him put up his Sword again; told him, that they who unwarrantably uſed the Sword, ſhould themſelves periſh by it; that there was no need of theſe violent and extravagant Courſes; that if he had a Mind to be rid of his Keepers, he could aſk his Father, who would preſently ſend more than twelve

Legions of Angels to his Reſcue and Deliverance: But he muſt *drink the Cup* which his Father had put into his Hand; for how elſe could the Scriptures be fulfilled, which had expreſly foretold, *That theſe Things muſt be?* Whereupon all the Apoſtles forſook him, and fled from him; and they who before in their Promiſes were as bold as Lions, now they came to it, like fearful and timorous Hares, ran away from him: *Peter* and *John*, though ſtaying laſt with him, yet followed the ſame Way with the reſt, preferring their own Safety before the Concernments of their Maſter.

No ſooner was he apprehended by the Soldiers, and brought out of the Garden, but he was immediately poſted from one Tribunal to another, brought firſt to *Annas*, then carried to *Caiaphas*, where the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim* met together in order to his Trial and Condemnation. *Peter* having a little recovered himſelf, and gotten looſe from his Fears, probably encouraged by his Companion St. *John*, returns back to ſeek his Maſter: And finding them leading him to the High-prieſt's Hall, followed afar off, to ſee what would be the Event and Iſſue. But coming to the Door, could get no Admittance, till one of the Diſciples who was acquainted there, went out and perſuaded the Servant, who kept the Door, to let him in. Being let into the Hall, where the Servants and Officers ſtood round the Fire, *Peter* alſo came thither to warm himſelf, where being eſpied by the Servant-maid that let him in, ſhe, earneſtly looking upon him, charged him with being one of *Chriſt's* Diſciples; which *Peter* publickly denied before all the Company, poſitively affirming, that *he knew him not*; and preſently withdrew himſelf into the Porch, where he heard the Cock crow: An Intimation, which one would have thought ſhould have awakened his Conſcience into a quicker Senſe of his Duty, and the Promiſe he had made unto his Maſter. In the Porch, another of the Maids ſet upon him, charging

charging him that *he was one of them that had been with* Jeſus *of* Nazareth: Which *Peter* ſtoutly denied, ſaying, that *he knew not* Chriſt; and the better to gain their Belief to what he ſaid, ratified it with an Oath. So natural is it for one Sin to draw on another.

About an Hour after he was a third Time ſet upon, by a Servant of the High-prieſt, *Malchus* his Kinſman, whoſe Ear *Peter* had lately cut off: By him he was charged to be one of *Chriſt*'s Diſciples; yea, *that his very Speech betrayed him to be a* Galilean. For the *Galileans*, though they did not ſpeak a different Language, had yet a different Dialect, uſing a more confuſed and barbarous, a broader and more unpoliſhed Way of Pronunciation than the reſt of the *Jews*; whereby they were eaſily diſtinguiſhable in their ſpeaking from other Men; abundant Inſtances whereof there are extant in the *Talmud* of this Day. Nay, he not only gave this Evidence, but added, that he himſelf had ſeen him with *Jeſus* in the Garden. *Peter* ſtill reſolutely denied the Matter, and to add the higheſt Accompliſhment to his Sin, ratified it with an Oath, by a ſolemn Curſe and Execration, that *he was not the Perſon*, that *he knew not the Man*. 'Tis but a very weak Excuſe, which St. *Ambroſe* and ſome others make for this Act of St. *Peter*'s, in ſaying, *I know not the Man. He did well* (ſays he) *to deny him to be the Man, whom he knew to be God*. St. *Hierom* takes Notice of this pious and well-meant Excuſe made for *Peter*, though out of Modeſty he conceals the Name of its Author, but yet juſtly cenſures it as trifling and frivolous, and which to excuſe *Man* from Folly, would charge *God* with Falſhood: For if he did not deny him, then our Lord was out, when he ſaid, that, *that Night he ſhould thrice deny him*, that is, his Perſon, and not only his Humanity. Certainly the beſt Apology that can be made for *Peter* is, that he quickly repented of this great Sin; for no ſooner

had he done it, but the Cock crow'd again; at which Intimation our Saviour turned about, and earneſtly looked upon him; a Glance that quickly pierced him to the Heart, and brought to his Remembrance, what our Lord had once and again foretold him of, how foully and ſhamefully he ſhould deny him: whereupon not being able to contain his Sorrow, he ran out of Doors to give it Vent, and *wept bitterly*, paſſionately bewailing his Folly, and the Aggravations of his Sin; thereby endeavouring to make ſome Reparation for his Fault, and recover himſelf into the Favour of Heaven, and to prevent the Execution of Divine Juſtice, by taking a ſevere Revenge upon himſelf: By theſe penitential Tears he endeavoured to waſh off his Guilt; as indeed Repentance is the next Step to Innocence.

WHAT became of *Peter* after his late Prevarication, whether he followed our Saviour through the ſeveral Stages of his Trial, and perſonally attended, as a Mourner at the Funeral of his Maſter, we have no Account left upon Record. No doubt he ſtaid at *Jeruſalem*, and probably with St. *John*, together with whom we firſt find him mentioned, when both were ſetting forwards to the Sepulchre; which was in this Manner: Early on the Morning, whereon our Lord was to return from the Grave, *Mary Magdalen*, and ſome other devout and pious Women brought Spices and Ointments, with a Deſign to embalm the Body of our crucified Lord. Coming to the Sepulchre at Sunriſing, and finding the Door open, they entered in, where they were ſuddenly ſaluted by an Angel, who told them, that *Jeſus* was riſen, and bad them go and acquaint the Apoſtles, and particularly *Peter*, that he was returned from the Dead; and that he would go before them into *Galilee*, where they ſhould meet with him. Hereupon they returned back, and acquainted the Apoſtles with what had paſſed, who beheld the Story as the Product of a weak frighted Fancy. But *Peter* and *John* preſently

preſently haſtened towards the Garden; *John*, being the younger and nimbler, out-ran his Companion, and came firſt thither, where he only looked, but entered not in, either out of Fear, in himſelf, or a great Reverence to our Saviour. *Peter*, though behind in Space, was before in Zeal, and being elder and more conſiderate, reſolutely entered in, where they found nothing but the Linen Clothes lying together in one Place, and the Napkin that was about his Head wrapped together in another; which being diſpoſed with ſo much Care and Order, ſhewed (what was falſly ſuggeſted by the *Jews*) that our Savour's Body was not taken away by Thieves, who are wont more to conſult their Eſcape, than how to leave Things orderly diſpoſed behind them.

The ſame Day, about Noon, we may ſuppoſe it was, that our Lord himſelf appeared alone to *Peter*; being aſſured of the Thing, though not ſo preciſely of the Time. That he did ſo, St. *Paul* expreſly tells us; and ſo did the Apoſtles to the two Diſciples that came from *Emmaus*, *The Lord is riſen, and hath appeared unto* Simon; which probably intimates, that it was before his appearing to thoſe two Diſciples. And indeed we cannot but think that our Lord would haſten the Manifeſtation of himſelf to him, as compaſſionating his Caſe, being overwhelmed with Sorrow for the late ſhameful Denial of his Maſter; and was therefore willing in the firſt Place to honour him with his Preſence, at once to confirm him in the Article of his Reſurrection, and to let him ſee, that he was reſtored to the Place which before he had in his Favour. St. *Paul* mentioning his ſeveral Appearances after his Reſurrection, ſeems to make this the firſt of them, *that he was ſeen of* Cephas. Not that it was ſimply the firſt, for he firſt appeared to the Women. But as *Chryſoſtom* obſerves, it was the firſt, that was made to Men. He was firſt ſeen of him who firſt deſired to ſee him. He alſo adds ſeveral probable Conjectures, why our

our Lord firſt diſcovered himſelf to *Peter*; as, that it required a more than ordinary Firmneſs and Reſolution of Mind, to be able to bear ſuch a Sight: For they who beheld him after others had ſeen him, and had heard their frequent Teſtimonies and Reports, had their Faith greatly prepared and encouraged to entertain it; but he who was to be honoured with the firſt Appearance, had need of a bigger, and more undaunted Faith, leſt he ſhould be overborn with ſuch a ſtrange and unwonted Sight: That *Peter* was the firſt that had made a ſignal Confeſſion of his Maſter, and therefore it was fit and reaſonable, that he ſhould firſt ſee him alive after his Reſurrection: That *Peter* had lately denied his Lord, the Grief whereof lay hard upon him, that therefore our Saviour was willing to adminiſter ſome Conſolation to him, and as ſoon as might be to let him ſee, that he had not caſt him off; like the kind *Samaritan*, he made haſte to help him, and to pour Oil into his wounded Conſcience.

Some time after this, the Apoſtles began to reſolve upon their Journey into *Galilee*, as he himſelf had commanded them. If it be enquired why they went no ſooner, ſeeing this was the firſt Meſſage and Intimation, that they had received from him; St. *Ambroſe* his Reſolution ſeems very rational, that our Lord indeed had commanded them to go thither, but that their Fears for ſome Time kept them at home; not being yet fully ſatisfied in the Truth of his Reſurrection, till our Lord, by often appearing to them, had confirmed their Minds, and put the Caſe beyond all Diſpute. They went, as we may ſuppoſe, in ſeveral Companies, leſt going all in one Body, they ſhould awaken the Power and Malice of their Enemies, and alarm the Care and Vigilancy of the State, which, by Reaſon of the Noiſe that our Saviour's Trial and Execution had made up and down the City and Country, was yet full of Jealouſies and Fears. We find *Peter*, *Thomas*, *Nathaniel*,

niel, and the two Sons of *Zebedee*, and two more of the Diſciples arrived at ſome Town about the Sea of *Tiberias*: Where, the Providence of God guiding the Inſtance of their Employment, *Peter*, accompanied with the reſt, returns to his old Trade of Fiſhing. They laboured all Night, but caught nothing. Early in the Morning a grave Perſon, probably in the Habit of a Traveller, preſents himſelf upon the Shore: And calling to them, aſked them, whether they had any Meat? When they told him, No: He adviſed them to caſt the Net on the Right-ſide of the Ship, that ſo the Miracle might not ſeem to be the Effect of Chance, and they ſhould not fail to ſpeed. They did ſo, and the Net preſently incloſed ſo great a Draught, that they were ſcarce able to drag it a-ſhore. St. *John* amazed with the Strangeneſs of the Matter, told *Peter*, that ſurely this muſt be the Lord, whom the Winds and Sea, and all the Inhabitants of that watery Region were ſo ready to obey.. *Peter*'s Zeal preſently took fire, notwithſtanding the Coldneſs of the Seaſon, and impatient of the leaſt Moment being kept from the Company of his dear Lord and Maſter, without any Conſideration of the Danger to which he expoſed himſelf; he girt his Fiſher's Coat about him, and throwing himſelf into the Sea, ſwam to Shore, not being able to ſtay till the Ship could arrive, which came preſently after. Landing, they found a Fire ready made, the Fiſh laid upon it, either immediately created by his Divine Power, or which came to Shore of its own Accord, and offered itſelf to his Hand. Which notwithſtanding he commands them to bring of the Fiſh which they had lately caught, and prepare it for their Dinner, he himſelf dining with them; both that he might give them an Inſtance of mutual Love and Fellowſhip, and alſo aſſure them of the Truth of his human Nature, ſince his Return from the Dead.

DINNER being ended, our Lord more particularly addreſſed himſelf to *Peter*; urging him to the utmoſt Diligence in his Care of Souls: And becauſe he knew, that nothing but a mighty Love to himſelf could carry him through the Troubles and Hazards of ſo dangerous and difficult an Employment; an Employment attended with all the Impediments, which either the Perverſeneſs of Men, or the Malice and Subtlety of the Devil could caſt in the way to hinder it; therefore he firſt enquired of him, whether he loved him more than the reſt of the Apoſtles, herein mildly reproving his former over-confident Reſolution, that *though all the reſt ſhould deny him, yet would he not deny him.* *Peter* modeſtly replied, not cenſuring others, much leſs preferring himſelf before them, that our Lord knew the Intregity of his Affection towards him. This Queſtion he puts three ſeveral Times to *Peter*, who as often returned the ſame Anſwer: It being but juſt that he who by a threefold Denial had given ſo much Cauſe to queſtion, ſhould now by a threefold Confeſſion give more than ordinary Aſſurance of his ſincere Affection to his Maſter. *Peter* was a little troubled at this frequent queſtioning of his Love, and therefore more expreſly appeals to our Lord's Omniſciency, that he who knew all Things, muſt needs know that he loved him. To each of theſe Confeſſions our Lord added this ſignal Trial of his Affections; then, *Feed my Sheep*; that is, faithfully inſtruct and teach them, carefully rule and guide them, perſuade, not compel them; feed, not fleece, nor kill them. And ſo 'tis plain St. *Peter* himſelf underſtood it, by the Charge which he gives to the Guides and Rulers of the Church, that *they ſhould feed the Flock of God, taking the Over-ſight thereof, not by Conſtraint, but willingly; not for filthy Lucre, but of a ready Mind: Neither as being Lords over God's Heritage, but as Examples to the Flock.* But that *by feeding* Chriſt's *Sheep and Lambs*, here commanded to St. *Peter*,

Peter, ſhould be meant an univerſal and uncontroulable Monarchy and Dominion over the whole *Chriſtian* Church, and that over the Apoſtles themſelves and their Succeſſors in ordinary, and this Power and Supremacy ſolely inveſted in St. *Peter*, and thoſe who were to ſucceed him in the See of *Rome*, is ſo wild an Inference, and ſuch a melting down Words to run into any Shape as could never with any Face have been offered, or been poſſible to have been impoſed upon the Belief of Mankind, if Men had not firſt ſubdued their Reaſon to their Intereſt, and captivated both to an implicit Faith and a blind Obedience. For granting that our Lord here addreſſed his Speech only unto *Peter*, yet the very ſame Power, in equivalent Terms, is elſewhere indifferently granted to all the Apoſtles, and, in ſome Meaſure, to the ordinary Paſtors and Governors of the Church: As when our Lord told them, That *all Power was given him in Heaven and in Earth*, by Virtue whereof *they ſhould go to teach and baptize all Nations*, and *preach the Goſpel to every Creature*: That *they ſhould feed God's Flock*, *rule well*, inſpect and watch over thoſe whom they had the Authority and Rule. Words of a larger and more expreſs Signification, than thoſe which were here ſpoken to St. *Peter*.

Our Lord having thus engaged *Peter* to a chearful Compliance with the Dangers that might attend the Diſcharge and Execution of his Office, now particularly intimates to him what that Fate was that ſhould attend him: telling him, that though when he was young he girt himſelf, lived at his own Pleaſure and went whither he pleaſed; yet when he was old, he ſhould ſtretch forth his Hands, and another ſhould gird and bind him, and lead him whither he had no Mind to go; intimating, as the *Evangeliſt* tells us, *by what Death he ſhould glorify God*; that is, by Crucifixion, the Martyrdom which he afterward underwent. And then riſing up, commanded him to

follow him; by his bodily Attendance, myſtically implying his Conformity to the Death of *Chriſt*, that he ſhould follow him in dying for the Truth and Teſtimony of the Goſpel. It was not long after, that our Lord appeared to them to take his laſt Farewel of them, when leading them out unto *Bethany*, a little Village upon the Mount of *Olives*, he briefly told them, That they were the Perſons, whom he had choſen to be the Witneſſes both of his Death and Reſurrection; a Teſtimony which they ſhould bear of him in all Parts of the World: In order to which he, would after his Aſcenſion, pour of his Spirit upon them in larger Meaſures than they had hitherto received, that they might be the better fortified to grapple with that violent Rage and Fury wherewith both Men and Devils would endeavour to oppoſe them; and that in the mean Time they ſhould return to *Jeruſalem*, and ſtay till theſe miraculous Powers were from on high conferred upon them. His Diſcouſe being ended, laying his Hands upon them, he gave them his ſolemn Bleſſing; which done, he was immediately taken from them, and being attended with a glorious Guard and Train of Angels, was received up into Heaven. Antiquity tells us, that in the Place where he laſt trod upon the Rock, the Impreſſion of his Feet did remain, which could never afterwards be filled up or impaired, over which *Helena*, Mother of the *Great Conſtantine*, afterwards built a little Chapel, called the *Chapel of the Aſcenſion*; in the Floor whereof, upon a whitiſh kind of Stone, modern Travellers tell us, that the Impreſſion of his Foot is ſhewed at this Day; but 'tis that of his Right-foot only, the other being taken away by the *Turks*, and, 'tis ſaid, kept in the Temple at *Jeruſalem*. Our Lord being thus taken from them, the Apoſtles were filled with a greater Senſe of his Glory and Majeſty, than while he was wont familiarly to converſe with them; and having performed their ſolemn Adorations to him, returned back to

Jeruſalem,

Jeruſalem, waiting for the Promiſe of the *Holy Ghoſt*, which was ſhortly after conferred upon them. *They worſhipped him, and returned to* Jeruſalem *with great Joy.* They who lately were overwhelmed with Sorrow at the very Mention of their Lord's Departure from them, entertained it now with Joy and Triumph, being fully ſatisfied of his glorious Advancement at God's Right-hand, and of that particular Care and Providence which they were ſure he would exerciſe towards them, in Purſuance of thoſe great Truſts he had committed to them.

THE holy *Jeſus* being gone to Heaven, the Apoſtles began to act according to the Power and Commiſſion he had left with them. In order whereunto, the firſt Thing they did after his Aſcenſion, was to fill up the Vacancy in their College, lately made by the unhappy Fall and Apoſtacy of *Judas*. To which End no ſooner were they returned to *Jeruſalem*, but they went *into an Upper Room.* Where this Upper-Room was, whether in the Houſe of St. *John*, or of *Mary John-Mark*'s Mother, or in ſome of the Out-rooms belonging to the Temple (for the Temple had, over the Cloiſters ſeveral Chambers for the Service of the Prieſts and *Levites*, and as Repoſitories, where the conſecrated Veſſels and Utenſils of the Temple were laid up, though it be not probable, that the *Jews*, and eſpecially the Prieſts, would ſuffer the Apoſtles and their Company to be ſo near the Temple) I ſtand not to enquire. 'Tis certain that the *Jews* uſually had their private Oratories in the upper Parts of their Houſes, for the more private Exerciſes of their Devotions. Thus *Daniel* had his Upper Chamber, whither he was wont to retire to pray to God: And *Benjamin* the *Jew* tells us, that in this Time (*Anno Chriſti* 1172.) the *Jews* at *Babylon* were wont to pray both in their Synagogues, and in that ancient Upper-Room of *Daniel*, which the Prophet himſelf built. Such an Upper-Chamber was that wherein St. *Paul* preached at *Troas*; and

ſuch probably was this, where the Apoſtles were now met together, and, in all Likelihood, the ſame where our Lord had lately kept the Paſſover, where the Apoſtles and the Church were aſſembled on the Day of *Pentecoſt*, and which was then the Place of their religious Aſſemblies. Here the Church being met to the Number of about a hundred and twenty, *Peter*, as Preſident of the Aſſembly began to ſpeak, and, applying him to the whole Congregation, propoſed to them the Choice of a new Apoſtle. And 'tis the Remark which St. *Chryſoſtom* makes upon this Paſſage, that *Peter* herein would do nothing without the common Conſent and Approbation, aſſuming no peculiar ſupereminent Power and Authority to himſelf. He put them in mind, that *Judas*, one of our Lord's Apoſtles, being betrayed by his own covetous and inſatiable Mind, had lately fallen from his Place and Miniſtry; that this was no more than what the Prophet had long ſince foretold ſhould come to paſs, and that the Rule and Overſight in the Church, which had been committed unto him, ſhould be devolved upon another: that therefore it was highly neceſſary, that one ſhould be ſubſtituted in his Room, and eſpecially ſuch a one as had been familiarly converſant with our Saviour, from firſt to laſt, that ſo he might be a competent Witneſs both of his Doctrine and Miracles, his Life and Death, but eſpecially of his Reſurrection from the Dead. For ſeeing no Evidence is ſo valid and ſatisfactory, as the Teſtimony of an Eye-witneſs, the Apoſtles all along mainly inſiſted upon this, that they delivered no other Things concerning our Saviour to the World, than what they themſelves had ſeen and heard. And ſeeing his Riſing from the Dead was a Principle likely to meet with a great deal of Oppoſition, and which would hardlieſt gain Belief and Entertainment with the Minds of Men, therefore they principally urged this at every Turn, that they *were Eye-witneſſes of his Reſurrection*; that they had ſeen,

ſeen, felt, eaten, and familiarly converſed with him, after his Return from the Grave. That therefore ſuch an Apoſtle might be choſen, two Candidates were propoſed, *Joſeph* called *Barſabas*, and *Matthias*. And having prayed that the Divine Providence would immediately guide and direct the Choice, they caſt Lots, and the Lot fell upon *Matthias*, who was accordingly admitted into the Number of the Twelve Apoſtles.

FIFTY Days ſince the laſt *Paſſover*, being now run out, made Way for the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*: At which Time the great Promiſe of the Holy Ghoſt was fully made good unto them. The *Chriſtian* Aſſembly being met together, for the publick Services of their Worſhip, on a ſudden a Sound, like that of a mighty Wind, ruſhed in upon them, repreſenting the powerful Efficacy of the divine Spirit, that was now to be communicated to them: After which there appeared little Flames of Fire, which, in Shape of Cloven Tongues, not only deſcended, but ſat upon each of them, probably to note their perpetual Enjoyment of this Gift, upon all Occaſions, that when neceſſary, they ſhould never be without it; not like the prophetic Gifts of Old, which were conferred but ſparingly, and only at ſome particular Times and Seaſons; as the *ſeventy Elders propheſied and ceaſed not*; but it was only at ſuch Times *as the Spirit came down and reſted upon them*: Hereupon they were all immediately filled with the Holy Ghoſt, which enabled them in an Inſtant to ſpeak ſeveral Languages, which they had never learned, and probably never heard of, together with other miraculous Gifts and Powers. Thus as the Confounding of Languages became a Curſe to the old World, ſeparating Men from all mutual Offices of Kindneſs and Commerce, rendering one Part of Mankind Barbarians to another; ſo here, the multiplying ſeveral Languages became a Bleſſing, being intended as the Means to bring Men of all Nations *into the Unity of the Faith, and the Knowledge of the*

Son

Son of God, into the Fellowſhip of that Religion, that would baniſh Diſcords, cement Differences, and unite Men's Hearts in the Bond of Peace. The Report of ſo ſudden and ſtrange an Action preſently ſpread itſelf into all Corners of the City; and there being, at that Time, at *Jeruſalem*, Multitudes of *Jewiſh* Proſelytes, *devout Men out of every Nation under Heaven*, Parthians, Medes, Elamites, (*or* Perſians) *the Dwellers in* Meſopotamia *and* Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus *and* Aſia Minor, *from* Phrygia *and* Pamphylia, *from* Egypt *and the Parts of* Lybia *and* Cyrene, *from* Rome, *from* Crete, *from* Arabia, *Jews* and *Proſelytes* (probably drawn thither by the general Report and Expectation which had ſpread itſelf over all the *Eaſtern* Parts, and in a Manner over all Places of the *Roman* Empire, of the *Jewiſh Meſſiah*, that about this Time ſhould be born at *Jeruſalem*) they no ſooner heard of it, but univerſally flocked to this *Chriſtian* Aſſembly; where they were amazed to hear theſe *Galileans* ſpeaking to them in their own native Languages, ſo various, ſo vaſtly different from one another. And it could not but exceedingly increaſe their Wonder to reflect upon the Meanneſs and Inconſiderableneſs of the Perſons, neither aſſiſted by natural Parts, nor poliſhed by Education, nor improved by Uſe and Cuſtom: Which three Things Philoſophers require to render a Man accurate and extraordinary in any Art or Diſcipline; as *Plutarch* ſays, *Natural Diſpoſition without Inſtitution is blind, Inſtruction without a Genius and Diſpoſition is defective, and Exerciſe without both is lame and imperfect.* Whereas theſe Diſciples had not one of theſe to ſet them off; their Parts were mean, below the Rate of common People, the *Galileans* being generally accounted the rudeſt and moſt ſtupid of the whole *Jewiſh* Nation; their Education had been no higher than to catch Fiſh, and to mend Nets; nor had they been uſed to plead Cauſes, or to deliver themſelves before great Aſſemblies; but ſpoke on a ſudden, not premeditated Diſcourſes; not idle Sto-

ries,

ries, or wild roving Fancies, but the great and admirable Works of God, and the Myſteries of the Goſpel beyond human Apprehenſions to find out, and this delivered in almoſt all the Languages of the then known World. Men were ſeverally affected with it, according to their different Tempers and Apprehenſions. Some admiring, and not knowing what to think on't; others, deriding it, ſaid, that it was nothing elſe but the wild raving Effect of Drunkenneſs and Intemperance. At ſo wild a Rate are Men of profane Minds wont to talk, when they take upon them to paſs their Cenſure in the Things of God.

HEREUPON the Apoſtles roſe up, and *Peter*, in the Name of the Reſt, took this Occaſion of diſcourſing to them: He told them, that this ſcandalous Slander proceeded from the Spirit of Malice and Falſhood; that their Cenſure was as uncharitable, as it was unreaſonable; that *they that are drunken, are drunk in the Night*; that it was againſt Nature and Cuſtom for Men to be in Drink ſo ſoon, too early for ſuch a Suſpicion to take Place, it being now about nine of the Clock, the Hour for Morning-Prayer, 'till then, Men, even of ordinary Sobriety and Devotion on Feſtival Days, were wont to faſt. That theſe extraordinary and miraculous Paſſages were but the Accompliſhment of an antient Prophecy, the fulfilling of what God had expreſly foretold ſhould come to paſs in the Times of the *Meſſiah*; that *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* had evidently approved himſelf to be the *Meſſiah* ſent from God by many unqueſtionable Miracles, of which they themſelves had been Eye-witneſſes: And though, by God's Permiſſion, who had determined, by this Means, to bring about the Salvation of Mankind, they had wickedly crucified and ſlain him, yet that God had raiſed him from the Dead: That it was not poſſible he ſhould be holden always under the Dominion of the Grave, nor was it conſiſtent with the Juſtice and Goodneſs of God, and eſpecially

cially with thoſe divine Predictions which had expreſly foretold he ſhould riſe again from the Dead: *David* having more particularly foretold, *That his Fleſh ſhould reſt in Hope, that God would not leave his Soul in Hell, neither ſuffer his Holy One to ſee Corruption*; but *would make known to him the Ways of Life.* That this Prophecy could not be meant concerning *David* himſelf, by whom it was ſpoken, he having many Ages ſince been turned to Aſhes, his Body diſſolved into Rottenneſs and Putrefaction, and his Tomb yet viſible among them, from which he never did return; that therefore it muſt needs have been prophetically ſpoken concerning *Chriſt*, having never been truly fulfilled in any but him, who both died, and was riſen again, whereof they were Witneſſes: Yea, that he was not only riſen from the Dead, but aſcended into Heaven, and, according to *David*'s Prediction, *ſat down on God's Right-Hand, until he made his Enemies his Foot ſtool*; which could not be primarily meant of *David*, he never having yet bodily aſcended into Heaven: That therefore the whole Houſe of *Iſrael* ought to believe, and take Notice, that this very *Jeſus*, whom they had crucified, was the Perſon whom God had appointed to be the Meſſiah and the Saviour of his Church.

THIS Diſcourſe, in every Part of it, like ſo many Daggers, pierced them to the Heart; who thereupon cried out to *Peter* and his Brethren, to know what they ſhould do. *Peter* told them, that there was no other Way, than by an hearty and ſincere Repentance, and a being baptized into the Religion of this crucified Saviour, to expiate their Guilt, to obtain Pardon of Sin, and the Gifts and Benefits of the Holy Ghoſt. That upon theſe Terms the Promiſes of the new Covenant, which was ratified by the Death of *Chriſt*, did belong to them and their Children, and to all that ſhould effectually believe and embrace the Goſpel; farther preſſing and perſuading them, by doing thus, to ſave themſelves from that unavoidable

Ruin

Ruin and Deſtruction, which this wicked and untoward Generation of obſtinate and unbelieving *Jews* were ſhortly to be expoſed to. The Effects of his Preaching were ſtrange and wonderful; as many as believed were baptized; there being that Day added to the Church, no leſs than three thouſand Souls. A quick and plentiful Harveſt; the late Sufferings of our Saviour, as yet freſh bleeding in their Memories; the preſent miraculous Powers of the Holy Ghoſt, that appeared unto them; the Zeal of his Auditors, though heretofore miſplaced and miſguided; and above all, the Efficacy of divine Grace contributing to this numerous Converſion.

THOUGH the converting ſo vaſt a Multitude might juſtly challenge a Place amongſt the greateſt Miracles, yet the Apoſtles began now more particularly to exerciſe their miraculous Powers. *Peter* and *John* going up to the Temple, about three of the Clock in the Afternoon, towards the Concluſion of one of the ſolemn Hours of Prayer, (for the *Jews* divided their Day into four greater Hours, each quarter containing three leſſer under it; three of which were publick and ſtated Times of Prayer, inſtituted (ſay they) by the three great Patriarchs of their Nation; the firſt from ſix of the Clock in the Morning till nine, called hence, *the third Hour of the Day*, inſtituted by *Abraham*, this was called *Morning Prayer*; the ſecond from nine till twelve, called the *ſixth Hour*, and this Hour of Prayer was ordained by *Iſaac*, this was called *Mid-day Prayer*; the third from twelve 'till three in the Afternoon, called *the ninth Hour*, appointed by *Jacob*, called *Evening Prayer*; and at this Hour it was that theſe two Apoſtles went up to the Temple, where they found a poor impotent Cripple, who, though above forty Years old, had been lame from his Birth, lying at the *Beautiful Gate* of the *Temple*, and aſking an Alms of them. *Peter* earneſtly looking on him, told him, he had no Money to give him, but that he would give him that which was a

great deal better, reſtore him to his Health; and lifting him up by the Hand, commanded him, in the Name of *Jeſus* of *Nazareth*, *to riſe up and walk*. The Word was no ſooner ſaid, than the Thing was done; immediately the Nerves and Sinews were enlarged, and the Joints returned to their proper Uſe. The Man ſtanding up, went into the Temple, walking, leaping, and praiſing God. The beholding ſo ſudden and extraordinary a Cure, begot great Admiration in the Minds of the People, whoſe Curioſity drew them to the Apoſtles, to ſee thoſe who had been the Authors of it. Which *Peter* taking Notice of, began to diſcourſe to them to this Effect: That there was no Reaſon they ſhould wonder at them, as if, by their own Skill and Art they had wrought this Cure, it being intirely done in the Name of their crucified Maſter, by the Power of that very *Chriſt*, that holy and juſt Perſon, whom they themſelves had denied and delivered up to *Pilate*, and preſerved a Rebel and a Murderer before him, when his Judge was reſolved to acquit him; And though they had put him to Death, yet that they were Witneſſes that God had raiſed him up again, and that he was gone to Heaven, where he muſt remain till the Times of the general Reſtitution; that he preſumed that this in them, as alſo in their Rulers, was, in a great Meaſure the Effect of Ignorance, and the not being thoroughly convinced of the Greatneſs and Divinity of his Perſon, which yet God made uſe of for the bringing about his wiſe and righteous Deſigns, the accompliſhing of what he had foretold concerning *Chriſt*'s Perſon and Sufferings, by *Moſes* and *Samuel*, and all the holy *Prophets which had been ſince the World began*: That therefore it was now high Time for them to repent, and turn to God, that their great Wickedneſs might be expiated; and that when *Chriſt* ſhould ſhortly come in Judgment upon the *Jewiſh* Nation, it might be a Time of Comfort and refreſhing to them, what would be of Vengeance and Deſtruction

ſtruction to other Men: That they were the peculiar Perſons, to whom the Bleſſings of the Promiſes did primarily appertain, and unto whom God in the firſt Place ſent his Son, that he might derive his Bleſſing upon them by *turning them away from their Iniquities*. While *Peter* was thus diſcourſing to the People in one Place, we may ſuppoſe that *John* was preaching to them in another; and the Succeſs was anſwerable. The Apoſtles caſt out the Seed, and God immediately gave the Increaſe. There being by this Means no fewer than five Thouſand brought over to the Faith; though 'tis impoſſible the whole Body of Believers might be comprehended in that Number.

While the Apoſtles were thus Preaching, the Prieſts and *Sadducees* (who particularly appeared in this Buſineſs, as being Enemies to all Tumults, or whatever might diſturb their preſent Eaſe and Quiet, the only Portion of Happineſs they expected; beſides that they hated *Chriſtianity*, becauſe ſo expreſly aſſerting the Reſurrection) being vexed to hear this Doctrine vented amongſt the People, intimated to the Magiſtrate, that this Concourſe might probably tend to an Uproar and Inſurrection: Whereupon they came with the Captain of the Temple who ſeized on the Apoſtles, and put them into Priſon. The next Day they were covened before the *Jewiſh Sanhedrim*; and being aſked by what Power and Authority they had done this; *Peter* reſolutely anſwered, that as to the Cure done to this impotent Perſon, be it known to them, and all the *Jews*, that it was wrought in the Name of that *Jeſus of Nazareth*, whom they themſelves had crucified, and God had raiſed from the Dead, and whom, though they had thrown him by as Rubbiſh, yet God had made *Head of the Corner*; and that there was no other Way, wherein they, or others, could expect Salvation, but by this crucified Saviour.

The Council commanded them to withdraw, and debated amongſt themſelves what they ſhould do with

them. The Miracle they could not deny, the Fact being ſo plain and evident, and therefore reſolved ſtrictly to charge them, that they ſhould preach no more in the Name of *Jeſus*. Being called in again, they acquainted them with the Reſolution of the Council; to which *Peter* and *John* replied, that they could by no means yield Obedience to it, appealing to themſelves, whether it was not more fit that *they ſhould obey God, rather than them*; as they could not but *teſtify what they had ſeen and heard*.

THE Church exceedingly multiplied by theſe Means: And that ſo great a Company (moſt whereof were poor) might be maintained, they generally ſold their Eſtates, and brought the Money to the Apoſtles, to be by them depoſited in one common Treaſury, and thence diſtributed according to the ſeveral Exigencies of the Church; which gave Occaſion to this dreadful Inſtance. *Ananias* and his Wife *Saphira* having taken upon them the Profeſſion of the Goſpel, according to the free and generous Spirit of thoſe Times, had conſecrated and devoted their Eſtate to the Honour of God and the Neceſſities of the Church; and accordingly ſold their Poſſeſſions, and turned them into Money. But as they were willing to gain the Reputation of charitable Perſons, ſo were they loath wholly to caſt themſelves upon the divine Providence, by letting go all at once; and therefore privately withheld Part of what they had devoted, and bringing the reſt, laid it at the Apoſtles Feet, hoping herein they might deceive the Apoſtles, though immediately guided by the Spirit of God. But *Peter*, at his firſt coming in, treated *Ananias* with theſe ſharp Enquiries: Why he would ſuffer *Satan* to fill his Heart with ſo great a Wickedneſs, as by keeping back of his Eſtate, to think to *deceive the Holy Ghoſt?* That before it was ſold, it was wholly at his own Diſpoſure; and after, it was perfectly in his own Power fully to have performed his Vow: So that it was capable of no other Interpretation,

pretation, than that herein he not only abuſed and injured Men, but mocked God, and, what in him lay, lied to and cheated the Holy Ghoſt, who he knew was privy to the moſt ſecret Thoughts and Purpoſes of his Heart. This was no ſooner ſaid, but ſuddenly, to the great Terror and Amazement of all that were preſent, *Ananias* was arreſted with a Stroke from Heaven, and fell down to the Ground. Not long after his Wife came in, whom Peter entertained with the ſame ſevere Reproofs, wherewith he had done her Huſband, adding, that the like ſad Fate and Doom ſhould immediately ſeize upon her, who thereupon dropt down dead, and as ſhe had been Co-partner with him in the Sin, ſhe became Sharer with him in the Puniſhment. An Inſtance of great Severity, filling all that heard of it with Fear and Terror, and became a ſeaſonable Prevention of Hypocriſy and Diſſimulation, wherewith many might poſſibly think to have impoſed upon the Church.

The Church had been hitherto toſſed with gentle Storms, but now a more violent Tempeſt overtook it, which began in the Proto-Martyr *Stephen*, and was moſt vigorouſly carried on afterwards; by Occaſion whereof the Diſciples were diſperſed: And God, who always brings Good out of Evil, hereby provided, that the Goſpel ſhould not be confined only to *Jeruſalem*. Hitherto the Church had been crowded up within the City-Walls, and their Religion had crept up and down in private Corners; but the Profeſſors of it being now diſperſed abroad, by the Malice and Cruelty of their Enemies, carried *Chriſtianity* along with them, and propagated it into the neighbouring Countries, accompliſhing hereby an ancient Prophecy, That *out of* Sion *ſhall go forth the Law, and the Word of the Lord from* Jeruſalem. Amongſt thoſe that were ſcattered, *Philip* the *Deacon*, was driven down unto *Samaria*, where he preached the Goſpel, and confirmed his preaching by many miraculous Cures, and diſpoſſeſſing Devils. In this City there was one

Simon,

Simon, who, by magick Arts, and diabolical Sorceries, ſought to advance himſelf into a great Fame and Reputation with the People, inſomuch that they generally beheld him as the *great Power of God*, for ſo the Antients tell us, he uſed to ſtyle himſelf, giving out himſelf to be the *firſt and chiefeſt Deity*, *the Father*, *who is God over all*; that is, that he was that which in every Nation was accounted the ſupreme Deity. This Man hearing the Sermons, and beholding the Miracles that were done by *Philip*, gave up himſelf amongſt the Number of Believers, and was baptized by them. The Apoſtles, who yet remained at *Jeruſalem*, having heard of the great Succeſs of *Philip*'s Miniſtry at *Samaria*, thought good to ſend ſome of their Number to his Aſſiſtance. And accordingly deputed *Peter* and *John*, who came thither. Where having prayed for, and laid their Hands upon theſe new Converts, they preſently received the Holy Ghoſt. *Simon the Magician* obſerving that by laying on of the Apoſtles Hands, miraculous Gifts were conferred upon Men, offered them a conſiderable Sum of Money to inveſt him with this Power, that on whom he laid his Hands, they might receive the Holy Ghoſt. *Peter* perceiving his rotten and inſincere Intentions, rejected his impious Motion with Scorn and Deteſtation: *Thy Money periſh with thee.*

THE Storm, though violent, being at length blown over, the Church enjoyed for ſome Time great Calmneſs and Serenity: During which *Peter* went out to viſit the Churches lately planted in thoſe Parts by thoſe Diſciples who had been diſperſed by the Perſecution at *Jeruſalem*. Coming down to *Lydia*, the firſt Thing he did, was to work a Cure upon one *Æneas*, who being crippled with the Palſy, had lain bed-rid for eight Years together. *Peter* coming to him, bad him, in the Name of *Chriſt* to ariſe, and the Man was immediately reſtored to his perfect Health. The Fame of this Miracle having flown to *Joppa*, a Sea-port Town, ſome ſix Miles thence, the

the *Chriſtians* there preſently ſent for *Peter* upon this Occaſion. *Tabitha*, whoſe *Greek* Name was *Dorcas*, a Woman venerable for her Piety and diffuſive Charity was newly dead, to the great Lamentation of all good Men, and much more to the Loſs of the Poor that had been relieved by her. *Peter* coming to the Houſe, found her dreſſed up for her Funeral Solemnity, and compaſſed about with the ſorrowful Widows, who ſhewed the Coats and Garments wherewith ſhe had cloathed them, the Badges of her charitable Liberality. *Peter* ſhutting all out, kneeled down and prayed, and then turning him to the Body, commanded her to ariſe, and lifting her up by the Hand, preſented her in perfect Health to her Friends, and thoſe that were about her; by which he confirmed many, and converted more to the Faith. After which he ſtaid ſome conſiderable Time at *Joppa*, lodging in the Houſe of *Simon* a Tanner.

While he abode in this City, retiring one Morning to the Houſe-top to pray, he found himſelf hungry, and called for Meat: But while it was preparing he himſelf fell into a Trance, wherein was preſented to him a large Sheet let down from Heaven, containing all Sorts of Creatures, clean and unclean; a Voice at the ſame Time calling to him, that he ſhould riſe, kill freely, and indifferently feed upon them; *Peter*, tenacious as yet of the Rites and Inſtitutions of the *Moſaic* Law, rejoined, that he could not do it, having never eaten any Thing that was common or unclean. To which the Voice replied, that what God had cleanſed he ſhould not account or call common. Which being done thrice, the Veſſel was again taken up into Heaven, and the Viſion preſently diſappeared. By this ſymbolic Repreſentment, though *Peter* at preſent knew not what to make of it, God was teaching him a new Leſſon, and preparing him to go upon an Errand and Embaſſy, which the Spirit at the ſame Time expreſly commanded

manded him to undertake. While he was in this doubtful Posture of Mind, three Messengers knocked at the Door, enquiring for him, from whom he received this Account: That *Cornelius*, a *Roman*, Captain of a Band of *Italian* Soldiers at *Cæsarea*, a Person of great Piety and Religion had by an immediate Command from God sent for him. The next Day *Peter*, accompanied with some of the Brethren, went along with them, and the Day after they came to *Cæsarea*. Against whose Arrival *Cornelius* had summoned his Friends and Kindred to his House. *Peter* arriving, *Cornelius* fell at his Feet and worshipped him. *Peter* rejecting the Honour, as due only to God, entered into the House, where he first made his Apology to the Company, that though they could not but know, that it was not lawful for a *Jew* to converse in the Duties of Religion with those of another Nation, yet that now God had taught him another Lesson. And then proceeded particularly to enquire the Reason of *Cornelius* his sending for him. Whereupon *Cornelius* told him, That four Days since, being conversant in the Duties of Fasting and Prayer, an Angel had appeared to him, and told him, that his Prayers and Alms were come up for a Memorial before God; that he should send to *Joppa* for one *Simon Peter*, who lodged in a Tanner's House by the Sea-side, who should farther make known his Mind to him; that accordingly he had sent, and being now come, they were there met to hear what he had to say to them.

Hereupon *Peter* began this Discourse, that by comparing Things it was now plain and evident, that the *Partition-wall* was broken down; that God had no longer a particular Kindness for Nations or Persons; that it was not the Nation, but the Religion; not the outward Quality of the Man, but the inward Temper of the Mind that recommends Men to God; that the devout and the pious, the righteous and the good Man, wherever he be, is equally dear to Heaven

Heaven; that God has as much Reſpect for a juſt and virtuous Perſon in the Wilds of *Scythia*, as upon *Mount Sion*; that the reconciling and making Peace between God and Man by *Jeſus Chriſt*, was the Doctrine publiſhed by the Prophets of old, and of late, ſince the Times of *John*, preached through *Galilee* and *Judea*, *viz.* That God had anointed and conſecrated *Jeſus* of *Nazareth* with Divine Powers and Graces, in the Exerciſe whereof he conſtantly went about to do Good to Men; that they had ſeen all he had done amongſt the *Jews*, whom though they had ſlain and crucified, yet that God had raiſed him again the third Day and had openly ſhewed him to his Apoſtles and Followers, whom he had choſen to be his peculiar Witneſſes, and whom to that End he had admitted to eat and drink with him after his Reſurrection, commanding them to preach the Goſpel to Mankind, and to teſtify that he was the Perſon whom God had ordained to be the great Judge of the World; that all the Prophets with one Conſent bore Witneſs of him; that this *Jeſus* is he, in whoſe Name whoſoever believes, ſhould certainly receive Remiſſion of Sins. While *Peter* was thus preaching to them the Holy Ghoſt fell upon a great Part of his Auditory, enabling them to ſpeak ſeveral Languages, and therein to magnify the Giver of them. Whereat the *Jews*, who came along with *Peter*, did ſufficiently wonder, to ſee that the Gifts of the Holy Ghoſt ſhould be poured upon the *Gentiles*. *Peter* ſeeing this, told the Company that he knew no Reaſon why theſe Perſons ſhould not be baptized, having received the Holy Ghoſt as well as they; and accordingly commanded them to be baptized. For whoſe farther Confirmation he ſtaid ſome Time longer with him.

It was now about the End of *Caligula*'s Reign, when *Peter* having finiſhed his Viſitation of the new-planted Churches, was returned unto *Jeruſalem*. Not long after *Herod Agrippa*, Grand-child to *Herod*

the Great, having attained the Kingdom, the better to ingratiate himſelf with the People, had lately put St. *Jews* to Death; and finding that this gratified the Vulgar reſolved to ſend *Peter* the ſame way after him. In order thereunto he apprehended him, caſt him into Priſon, and ſet ſtrong Guards to watch him: the Church, in the mean time, being very inſtant and importunate with Heaven for his Life and Safety. The Night before his intended Execution, God purpoſely ſent an Angel from Heaven, who coming to the Priſon, found him faſt aſleep between two of his Keepers. The Angel raiſed him up, knocked off his Chains, bad him gird on his Garments, and follow him. He did ſo, and having paſſed the firſt and ſecond Watch, and entered after through the *Iron-gate* into the City having paſſed through one Street more, the Angel departed from him. By this Time *Peter* came to himſelf, and perceived that it was no Viſion, but a Reality that had happened to him. Whereupon he came to *Mary*'s Houſe, where the Church were met together at Prayer for him. Knocking at the Door, the Maid, who came to let him in, perceiving it was his Voice, ran back to tell them that *Peter* was at the Door: Which they firſt looked upon as nothing but the Effect of Fright or Fancy; but ſhe ſtill affirming it, they concluded that it was his Angel, or ſome peculiar Meſſenger ſent from him. The Door being opened, they were ſtrangely amazed at the Sight of him: But he briefly told them the Manner of his Deliverance, and charging them to acquaint the Brethren with it, preſently withdrew into another Place.

Some time after this it happened, that a Controverſy ariſing between the *Jewiſh* and *Gentile* Converts about the Obſervation of the *Moſaic* Law, the Minds of Men were exceedingly diſquieted and diſturbed with it; the *Jews* zealouſly contending for Circumciſion, and the Obſervance the Ceremonial

Law

Law to be joined with the Belief and Profeſſion of the Goſpel, as equally neceſſary to Salvation. To compoſe this Difference, by the beſt Expedient that could be thought on was, to call a general Council of the Apoſtles and Brethren to meet together at *Jeruſalem*, which was done accordingly, and the Caſe thoroughly ſcanned and canvaſſed. At laſt *Peter* ſtood up, and acquainted the Synod, that God having made Choice of him among all the Apoſtles, to be the firſt that preached the Goſpel to the *Gentiles*; God, who had born Witneſs to them, that they were accepted of him, by giving them his Holy Spirit as well as he had done to the *Jews*; having put no Difference between the one and the other. That therefore it was tempting and provoking God, to put a Yoke upon the Necks of the Diſciples, which neither they themſelves nor their Fathers were able to bear; there being Ground enough to believe, that the *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews* ſhould be ſaved by the Grace of the Goſpel. After ſome other of the Apoſtles had declared their Judgments in the Caſe, it was unanimouſly decreed, that except the temporary Obſervance of ſome few particular Things, equally convenient both for *Jew* and *Gentile*, no other Burden ſhould be impoſed upon them. And ſo the Decrees of the Council being drawn up in a *Synodical Epiſtle*, were ſent abroad to the ſeveral Churches, for allaying the Heats and Controverſies that had been raiſed about this Matter.

PETER, a while after the Celebration of this Council, left *Jeruſalem*, and came down to *Antioch*, where uſing the Liberty which the Goſpel had given him, he familiarly eat, and converſed with the *Gentile* Converts, accounting them, now that the *Partition-wall was broken down*, no longer *Strangers and Foreigners, but Fellow-citizens with the Saints, and of the Houſhold of God*: This he had been taught by the Viſion of the Sheet let down from Heaven; this had been lately decreed,

and he himſelf had promoted and ſubſcribed it in the Synod of *Jeruſalem:* This he had before practiſed towards *Cornelius* and his Family, and juſtified the Action to the Satisfacton of his Accuſers; and this he had here freely and innocently done at *Antioch*, till ſome of the *Jewiſh* Brethren coming thither, for fear of offending and diſpleaſing them, he withdrew his Converſe with the *Gentiles*, as if it had been unlawful for him to hold Communion with uncircumciſed Perſons, when yet he knew, and was fully ſatisfied, that our Lord had wholly removed all Difference, and broken down the Wall of Separation between *Jew* and *Gentile*. In which Affair, as he himſelf acted againſt the Light of their own Mind and Judgment, condemned what he had approved, and deſtroying what he had before built up; ſo hereby he confirmed the *Jewiſh* Zealots in their inveterate Error, caſt infinite Scruples into the Minds of the *Gentiles*, filling their Conſciences with Fears and Diſatisfactions, reviving the old Feuds and Prejudices between *Jew* and *Gentile*; by which Means many others were enſnared; yea, the whole Number of *Jewiſh* Converts followed his Example, ſeparating themſelves from the Company of the *Gentile* Chriſtians. Yea, ſo far did it ſpread, that *Barnabas* himſelf was carried away with the Stream and Torrent of this unwarrantable Practice. St. *Paul*, who was at this Time come to *Antioch*, unto whom *Peter* gave the *Right Hand of Fellowſhip*, acknowledging his Apoſtleſhip of the Circumciſion, obſerving theſe evil and unevangelical Actings, reſolutely withſtood *Peter* to the Face, and publickly reproved him as a Perſon worthy to be blamed for his groſs Prevarication in this Matter; ſeverely expoſtulating and reaſoning with him, that he who was himſelf a *Jew*, and thereby under a more immediate Obligation to the *Moſaick* Law, ſhould caſt off that Yoke himſelf, and yet endeavour to impoſe it upon the *Gentiles*, who were not in the leaſt under any Obligation to it.

it. A ſmart, but an impartial Charge; and indeed ſo remarkable was this Carriage of St. *Paul* towards our Apoſtle, that though it ſet Things right for the preſent, yet it made ſome Noiſe abroad in the World.

HITHERTO in drawing up the Life of this great Apoſtle, we have had an infallible Guide to conduct and lead us; but the ſacred Story breaking off here, forces us to look abroad, and to pick up what *Memoirs* the Ancients have left us in this Matter; which we ſhall for the main digeſt according to the Order, wherein *Baronius*, and other Eccleſiaſtical Writers have diſpoſed the Series of St. *Peter*'s Life. And that we may preſent the Account perfect, we muſt ſtep back a little Point of Time, that ſo we may go forward with greater Advantage. We are to know therefore that during the Peace and Calmneſs which the Church enjoyed after *Saul*'s Perſecution, when St. *Peter* went down to viſit the Churches, he is ſaid to have gone to *Antioch*, where great Number of *Jews* inhabited, and there to have planted the *Chriſtian* Faith. That he founded a Church here, *Euſebius* expreſly tells us; and by others it is ſaid, that he himſelf was the firſt Biſhop of this See. Sure I am, that St. *Chryſoſtom* reckons it one of the greateſt Honours of that City, that St. *Peter* ſtaid ſo long there, and that the Biſhop of it ſucceeded him in that See. The Care and Precedency of the Church he had between ſix and ſeven Years. Not that he ſtaid there all the Time, but that having ordered and diſpoſed Things to the beſt Avantage, he returned to other Affairs and Exigences of the Church confirming the new Plantations, bringing in *Cornelius* and his Family, and in him the Firſt-fruits of the *Gentiles* Converſion to the Faith of *Chriſt*. After which he returned unto *Jeruſalem*, where he was impriſoned by *Herod*, and miraculouſly delivered by an Angel ſent from Heaven.

WHAT became of *Peter* after his Deliverance out of Priſon, is not certainly known: Probably he might

might preach in ſome Parts a little farther diſtant from *Judea*, as we are told he did at *Byzantium*, and in the Countries thereabout (though, I confeſs, the Evidence to me is not convincing.) After this he reſolved upon a Journey to *Rome*; where moſt agree, he arrived about the ſecond Year of the Emperor *Claudius*. *Oroſius* tells us, that coming to *Rome*, he brought Proſperity with him to that City; For beſides ſeveral other extraordinary Advantages which at that Time happened to it, this was not the leaſt obſervable, that *Camillus Scribonianus*, Governor of *Dalmatia*, ſolliciting the Army to rebel againſt the Emperor, the Eagles, their military Standard, remaining ſo faſt in the Ground that no Power nor Strength was able to pluck them up. With which unuſual Accident the Minds of the Soldiers were ſurprized and ſtartled, and turning their Swords againſt the Authors of the Sedition, continued firm and loyal in their Obedience: Whereby a dangerous Rebellion was prevented, likely enough otherwiſe to have broken out. This he aſcribes to St. *Peter*'s coming to *Rome*, and the firſt Plantation of the *Chriſtian* Faith in that City. Heaven beginning more particularly to ſmile upon that Place at his firſt coming thither. 'Tis not to be doubted, but that at the firſt Arrival he diſpoſed himſelf amongſt the *Jews* his Countrymen, who, ever ſince the Time of *Auguſtus*, had dwelt in the Region beyond *Tybur*. But when afterwards he began to preach to the *Gentiles*, he was forced to change his Lodging, and was taken in by one *Pudens*, a Senator lately converted to the Faith. Here he cloſely plied his main Office and Employment, to eſtabliſh Chriſtianity in that Place. Here we are told, he met with *Philo* the *Jew*, lately come on his ſecond Embaſſy unto *Rome*, in the Behalf of his Countrymen at *Alexandria*, and to have contracted an intimate Friendſhip and Acquaintance with him. And now it, was, ſays *Baronius*, that *Peter* being mindful of the Churches

Churches which he founded in *Pontus*, *Galatia*, *Cappadocia*, *Bithynia* and *Aſia the leſs*, wrote his Epiſtle to them which he probably infers hence, that St. *Mark* being yet with him at the Time of the Date of this Epiſtle, it muſt be written at leaſt ſome Time this Year, for that now it was that St. *Mark* ſent to preach and propagate the Faith in *Egypt*. Next to the planting Religion at *Rome*, he takes Care to propagate it in the *Weſtern* Parts. And to that End he ſent abroad Diſciples into ſeveral Provinces, that ſo *their Sound might go into all the Earth, and their Words into the Ends of the World.*

IT happened that after St. *Peter* had been ſeveral Years at *Rome*, *Claudius* the Emperor taking Advantage of ſome Seditions and Tumults raiſed by the *Jews*, by a publick Edict baniſhed them out of *Rome*: In the Number of whom St. *Peter* (they ſay) departed thence, and returned back to *Jeruſalem*, where he was preſent at that great Apoſtolical Synod, of which before. After this we are left under great Uncertainties, how he diſpoſed of himſelf for many Years. Confident we may be that he was not idle, but ſpent his Time ſometimes in preaching in the *Eaſtern* Parts, ſometimes in other Parts of the World, as in *Africk*, *Sicily*, *Italy*, and other Places.

NERO returning from *Achaia*, and entring *Rome* with a great deal of Pomp and Triumph, reſolved now the Apoſtles ſhould fall a Victim and Sacrifice to his Cruelty and Revenge. While the fatal Stroke was daily expected, the *Chriſtians* in *Rome* did by daily Prayers and Importunities, ſolicit St. *Peter* to make an Eſcape, and to reſerve himſelf to the Uſes and Services of the Church. This at firſt he rejected, as what would ill reflect upon his Courage and Conſtancy, and argue him to be afraid of thoſe Sufferings for *Chriſt*, to which he himſelf had ſo often perſuaded others; but the Prayers and Tears of the People overcame him, and made him yield. Accordingly the next Night having prayed with, and taken

ken his Farewel of the Brethren, he got over the Priſon-wall, and coming to the City-gate, he is there ſaid to have met with our Lord, who was juſt entring into the City. *Peter* aſked him, *Lord, whither art thou going?* from whom he preſently received this Anſwer, *I am come to* Rome, *to be crucified a ſecond Time.* By which Anſwer, *Peter* apprehended himſelf to be reproved, and that our Lord meant it of his Death, that he was to be crucified in his Servant. Whereupon he went back to the Priſon, and delivered himſelf into the Hands of his Keepers, ſhewing himſelf moſt ready and chearful to acquieſce in the Will of God. And we are told, that in the Stone whereon our Lord ſtood while he talked with *Peter*, he left the Impreſſion of his Feet, which Stone has been ever ſince preſerved as a very ſacred Relique, and, after ſeveral Tranſlations, was at length fixed in the Church of St. *Sebaſtian* the Martyr, where it is kept viſited with great Expreſſions of Reverence and Devotion at this Day. Before his Suffering he was no queſtion ſcourged, according to the Manner of the *Romans*, who were wont firſt to whip thoſe Malefactors, who were adjudged to the moſt ſevere and capital Puniſhments: Having ſaluted his Brethren, and eſpecially having taken his laſt Farewel of St. *Paul*, he was brought out of the Priſon, and led to the Top of the *Vatican Mount*, near to *Tybur*, the Place deſigned for his Execution. The Death he was adjudged to was Crucifixion, as of all others accounted the moſt ſhameful, ſo the moſt ſevere and terrible. But he intreated the Favour of the Officers, that he might not be crucified in the ordinary Way, but might not ſuffer with his Head downwards, and his Feet up to Heaven, affirming that he was unworthy to ſuffer in the ſame Poſture wherein his Lord had ſuffered before him. Happy Man (as *Chryſoſtom* gloſſes) to be ſet in the readieſt Poſture of travelling from Earth to Heaven. His Body being taken from the Croſs, is ſaid to have been

been embalmed by *Marcellinus* the Preſbyter, after the *Jewiſh* Manner, and was then buried in the *Vatican*, near the Triumphal Way. Over his Grave a ſmall Church was ſoon after erected, which being deſtroyed by *Heliogabalus*, his Body was removed to the *Appian Way*, two Miles from *Rome*; where it remained till the Time of Pope *Cornelius*, who reconveyed it to the *Vatican*, where it reſted ſomewhat obſcurely until the Reign of *Conſtantine*, who out of the mighty Reverence which he had for the *Chriſtian* Religion, cauſed many Churches to be built at *Rome*, but eſpecially rebuilt and enlarged the *Vatican* to the Honour of St. *Peter*; in the doing whereof he himſelf is ſaid to have been the firſt that began to dig the Foundation, and to have carried thence twelve Baſkets of Rubbiſh with his own Hands, in Honour, as it ſhould ſeem, of the twelve Apoſtles. He infinitely enriched the Church with Gifts and Ornaments, which, in every Age encreaſed in Splendor and Riches, till it is become one of the Wonders of the World at this Day. Of whoſe Glories, Statelineſs and Beauty, and thoſe many venerable Monuments of Antiquity that are in it, they who deſire to know more, may be plentifully ſatisfied by *Onuphrius*: Only one amongſt the reſt muſt not be forgotten; there being kept that very wooden Chair wherein St. *Peter* ſate when he was at *Rome*, by the only touching whereof many Miracles are ſaid to be performed. But ſurely *Baronius*'s Wiſdom and Gravity were from Home, when ſpeaking of this Chair, and fearing that the Hereticks would imagine that it might be rotten in ſo long Time, he tells us, that it is no Wonder that this Chair ſhould be preſerved ſo long, when *Euſebius* affirms, that the wooden Chair of St. *James*, Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, was extant in the Time of *Conſtantine*. But the Cardinal, it ſeems, forgot to conſider, that there is ſome Difference between three and ſixteen hun-

dred Years. But of this enough. St. *Peter* was crucified according to the common Computation, in the Year of *Chriſt* ſixty-nine, and the thirteenth (or, as *Euſebius*, the fourteenth) of *Nero*, how truly may be enquired afterwards.

HAVING run through the current Hiſtory of St. *Peter*'s Life, it may not be amiſs in the next Place, to ſurvey a little his Perſon and Temper. His Body, (if we may believe the Deſcription given of him by *Nicephorus*) was ſomewhat ſlender, of a middle Size, but rather inclining to Tallneſs; his Complexion very pale, and almoſt white; the Hair of his Head and Beard curled and thick, but withal ſhort; though St. *Hierome* tells us, out of *Clemens*'s *Periods*, that he was bald, which probably might be in his declining Age; his Eyes black, but ſpecked with red, which *Baronius* will have proceed from his frequent weeping; his Eye-brows thin, or none at all; his Noſe long, but rather broad and flat, than ſharp; ſuch was the Caſe and Outſide. Let us next look inwards, and view the Jewel that was within. Take him as a Man, and there ſeems to have been a natural Eagerneſs predominant in his Temper, which, as a Whetſtone ſharpened his Soul for bold and generous Undertakings. It was this, in a great Meaſure, that made him ſo forward to ſpeak, and to return Anſwers, ſometimes, before he had well conſidered them. It was this made him expoſe his Perſon to the moſt imminent Dangers, promiſe thoſe great Things in Behalf of his Maſter, and reſolutely draw his Sword, in his Quarrel, againſt a whole Band of Soldiers, and wound the High-prieſt's Servant; and poſſibly he had attempted greater Matters, had not our Lord reſtrained, and taken him off, by that ſeaſonable Check that he gave him.

THE Writings that entitle themſelves to this Apoſtle, were either genuine, or ſuppoſititious. The genuine

genuine Writings are his two Epiſtles, which make up Part of the ſacred Canon.

As for the *Second Epiſtle*, it was not accounted of old of equal Value and Authority with the *Firſt*, and therefore, for ſome Ages, not taken into the ſacred Canon, as is expreſly affirmed by *Euſebius*, and many of the Antients before him. The antient *Syriac* Church did not receive it, and accordingly it is not to be found in their antient Copies of the *New Teſtament:* Yea, thoſe of that Church at this Day do not own it as canonical, but only read it privately, as we do the *Apocryphal* Books. The greateſt Exception that I can find againſt it, was the Difference of its Stile from the other Epiſtle; and therefore it was preſumed, that they were not both written by the ſame Hand. But it has ſince been proved to be canonical, and is accordingly received by the Church as ſuch.

Besides theſe divine Epiſtles, there were other ſuppoſititious Writings, which, in the firſt Ages were fathered upon St. *Peter*. Such was the Book called his Acts, mentioned by *Origen*, *Euſebius* and others, but rejected by them. Such was his Goſpel, which probably at firſt was nothing elſe but the Goſpel written by St. *Mark*, dictated to him (as is generally thought) by St. *Peter*; and therefore as St. *Hierome* tells us, ſaid to be his. Though in the next Age there appeared a Book under that Title, mentioned by *Serapion*, Biſhop of *Antioch*, and by him at firſt ſuffered to be read in the Church; but afterwards, upon a more careful Peruſal of it, he rejected it as *Apocryphal*, as it was by others after him: Another was the Book ſtiled *His Preaching*, mentioned and quoted both by *Clemens Alexandrinus*, and by *Origen*, but not acknowledged by them to be genuine; nay, expreſly ſaid to have been forged by Heretics, by an antient Author, cotemporary with St. *Cyprian*. The

next was his *Apocalypſe* or *Revelation*, rejected, as *Sozomen* tells us, by the Antients as ſpurious, but yet read in ſome Churches in *Paleſtine*, in his Time. The laſt was the Book called *His Judgment*, which probably was the ſame with that called *Hermes* or *Paſtor*; a Book of good Uſe and Eſteem in the firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*, and which, as *Euſebius* tells us, was not only frequently cited by the Antients, but alſo publickly read in Churches.



CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The LIFE *of St.* PAUL.

THOUGH St. *Paul* was not one of the Twelve Apoſtles, yet had he the Honour of being an Apoſtle extraordinary, and to be immediately called in a Way peculiar to himſelf. He juſtly deſerves a Place next St. *Peter*; for as *in their Lives they were pleaſant and lovely*, ſo *in their Deaths they were not divided*; eſpecially if it be true, that they both ſuffered not only for the ſame Cauſe, but at the ſame Time, as well as Place. St. *Paul* was born at *Tarſus*, the Metropolis of *Cilicia*; a City infinitely rich and populous, and what contributed more to the Fame and Honour of it, an Academy, furniſhed with Schools of Learning, where the Scholars ſo cloſely plied their Studies, that, as *Strabo* informs us, they excelled in all Arts of polite Learning and Philoſophy thoſe of other Places, yea, even of *Alexandria*, and *Athens* itſelf; and that even *Rome* was beholden to it for many of its beſt Profeſſors. It was a *Roman Municipium*, or free Corporation, inveſted with many Franchiſes and Privileges by *Julius Cæſar*, and *Auguſtus*; who granted to the Inhabitants of it the Honours and Immunities of Citizens of *Rome*. In which Reſpect St. *Paul* owned and aſſerted as the Privilege of his Birthright, that he was a *Roman*, and thereby free from being bound or beaten. True it is, that St. *Jerome* (followed herein by one, who himſelf travel-

led

led in theſe Parts) makes him born at *Giſchalis*, a well fortified Town in *Judea*, which being beſieged and taken by the *Roman* Army, his Parents fled away with him and dwelt at *Tarſus*. But beſides that this contradicts St. *Paul*, who expreſly affirms, that he was born at *Tarſus*, there needs no more to confute this Opinion, than that St. *Jerome* elſewhere ſlights it as a fabulous Report.

His Parents were *Jews*, and that of the ancient Stock, not entering in by the Gate of Proſelytiſm, but originally deſcended from that Nation, which ſurely he means, when he ſays, That he *was an Hebrew of the Hebrews*; either becauſe both his Parents were *Jews*, or rather that all his Anceſtors had been ſo. They belonged to the Tribe of *Benjamin*, whoſe Founder was the youngeſt Son of the old Patriarch *Jacob*, who thus propheſied of him: Benjamin *ſhall raven as a Wolf, in the Morning he ſhall devour the Prey, and at Night he ſhall divide the Spoil.*

We find him deſcribed by two Names in Scripture, one *Hebrew*, and the other *Latin*; probably referring both to his *Jewiſh* and *Roman* Capacity and Relation. The one, *Saul*, a Name frequent and common in the Tribe of *Benjamin* ever ſince the firſt King of *Iſrael*, who was of that Name, was choſen out of the Tribe; in Memory whereof they were wont to give their Children this Name at their Circumciſion. His other was *Paul*, aſſumed by him, as ſome think, at his Converſion, to denote his Humility.

In his Youth he was brought up in the Schools of *Tarſus*, fully inſtructed in all the liberal Arts and Sciences, whereby he became admirably acquainted with foreign and external Authors. Together with which he was brought up to a particular Trade and Courſe of Life; according to the great Maxim and Principle of the *Jews*, That, *He who teaches not his Son a Trade, teaches him to be a Thief.* They thought it not only fit, but a neceſſary Part of Education,

for

for their wiſeſt and moſt learned Rabbins to be brought up to a manual Trade, whereby, if Occaſion was, they might be able to maintain themſelves. Hence (as *Druſius* obſerves) nothing more than common in their Writings, than to have them denominated from their Callings, *Rabbi Joſe* the *Tanner*, *Rabbi Jochanan* the *Shoemaker*, *Rabbi Juda* the *Baker*, &c. A Cuſtom taken by the *Chriſtians*, eſpecially the Monks and Aſceticks of the primitive Times, who together with their ſtrict Profeſſion, and almoſt incredible Exerciſes of Devotion, each took upon him a particular Trade, whereat he daily wrought, and by his own Hand-labour maintained himſelf. And this Courſe of Life the *Jews* were very careful ſhould be free from all Suſpicion of Scandal; being wont to ſay, That he was happy that had his Parents employed in an honeſt commendable Calling; as he was miſerable, who ſaw them converſant in any ſordid and diſhoneſt Courſe of Life. The Trade our Apoſtle was put to, was that of *Tent-making*, whereat he wrought for ſome particular Reaſons, even after his Calling to the Apoſtolate. An honeſt, but mean Courſe of Life, and, as *Chryſoſtom* obſerves, an Argument that his Parents were not of the nobler and better Rank.

HAVING run through the whole Circle of Sciences, and laid the ſure Foundation of human Learning at *Tarſus*, he was by his Parents ſent to *Jeruſalem*, to be perfected in the Study of the Law, and put under the Tutorage of *Rabban Gamaliel*.

UNDER the Tuition of this great Maſter St. *Paul* was educated in the Knowledge of the Law, wherein he made ſuch quick and vaſt Improvements that he ſoon out-ſtript his Fellow-Diſciples. Amongſt the various Sects at that Time in the *Jewiſh* Church, he was eſpecially educated in the Principles and Inſtitutions of the *Phariſees*; of which Sect was both his Father and his Maſter, where he became a moſt earneſt and zealous Profeſſor.

But God who had deſigned him for Work of another Nature, and *ſeperated him from his Mother's Womb to the Preaching of the Goſpel*, ſtopt him in his Journey when he had undertaken to perſecute the Diſciples of Chriſt. For while he was together with his Company travelling on the Road, not far from *Damaſcus*, on a ſudden a Gleam of Light beyond the Splendor and Brightneſs of the Sun, was darted from Heaven upon them, whereat being ſtrangely amazed and confounded, they all fell to the Ground, a Voice calling to him, *Saul, Saul, why perſecuteſt thou me?* To which he replied, *Lord, who art thou?* Who told him, That *he was* Jeſus *whom he perſecuted*, that what was done to the Members was done to the Head; that it was hard for him to kick againſt the Pricks, that he now appeared to him, and to make Choice of him for a Miniſter, and a Witneſs of what he had ſeen, and ſhould after hear; that he would ſtand by him, and preſerve him, and make him a great Inſtrument in the Converſion of the *Gentile* World. This ſaid, he aſked our Lord, what he would have him to do? who bad him go into the City, where he ſhould receive his Anſwer. St. *Paul*'s Companions, who had been preſent at this Tranſaction, heard the Voice, but ſaw not him that ſpoke to him; though elſewhere the Apoſtle himſelf affirms, that they ſaw the Light, but heard not the Voice of him that ſpake; that is, they heard a confuſed Sound, but not a diſtinct and articulate Voice; or, more probably, being ignorant of the *Hebrew* Language, wherein our Lord ſpake to St. *Paul*, they heard the Words, but knew not the Senſe and Meaning of them.

St. *Paul* by this Time was gotten up, but though he found his Feet, yet he had loſt his Eyes, being ſtricken blind with the extraordinary Brightneſs of the Light, and was accordingly led by his Companions into *Damaſcus*. In which Condition he there remained, faſting three Days together. At this Time,

Time, we may probably ſuppoſe it was that Viſion and Ecſtaſy, wherein he was taken up into the third Heaven, where he ſaw and heard Things great and unutterable, and was fully inſtructed in the Myſteries of the Goſpel, and hence expreſly affirms, that he was not *taught the Goſpel which he preached by Man, but by the Revelation of* Jeſus Chriſt. There was at this Time at *Damaſcus* one *Ananias*, a very devout and religious Man, and though a *Chriſtian*, yet of great Reputation among all the *Jews*. To him our Lord appeared, and commanding him to go into ſuch a Street, and to ſuch an Houſe, and there enquire for one *Saul* of *Tarſus*, who was now at Prayer, and had ſeen him in a Viſion coming to him, to lay his Hands upon him that he might receive his Sight. *Ananias* ſtartled at the Name of the Man, having heard of his Bloody Temper and Practices, and upon what Errand he was now come down to the City. But our Lord, to take off his Fears, told him, that he miſtook the Man, that he had now taken him to be a *choſen Veſſel*, to preach the Goſpel both to *Jews* and *Gentiles*, and before the greateſt Potentates upon Earth; acquainting him with what great Things he ſhould both do and ſuffer for his Sake, what Chains and Impriſonments, what Racks and Scourges, what Hunger and Thirſt, what Shipwracks and Death, he ſhould undergo. Upon this *Ananias* went, laid his Hands upon him, told him that our Lord had ſent him to him, that he might receive his Sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghoſt; which was no ſooner done, but thick Films, like Scales, fell from his Eyes, and his Sight returned. And the next Thing he did was to be baptized, and ſolemnly initiated into the *Chriſtian* Faith. After which he joined himſelf to the Diſciples of that Place, to the equal Joy and Wonder of the Church; that the *Wolf* ſhould ſo ſoon lay down its Fierceneſs, and put on the meek Nature of a *Lamb*; that he who had lately been ſo violent a Perſecutor, ſhould

now become not a Profeſſor only, but a Preacher of that Faith, which before he had routed and deſtroyed.

St. *Paul* ſtaid not long at *Damaſcus* after his Converſion, but having received an immediate Intimation from Heaven, probably in the Ecſtaſy wherein he was caught up thither, he waited for no other Counſel or Direction in the Caſe, leſt he ſhould ſeem to derive his Miſſion and Authority from Men, and *being not diſobedient to the Heavenly Viſion*, he preſently retired out of the City; and ſooner probably, to decline the Odium of the *Jews*, and the Effects of the Rage and Malice which he was ſure would purſue and follow him. He withdrew into the Parts of *Arabia* (thoſe Parts of it that lay next to the Region of *Damaſcus*; nay *Damaſcus* itſelf was ſometimes accounted Part of *Arabia*, as we ſhall note by and by from *Tertullian*) where he ſpent the *Firſt-fruits* of his Miniſtry, preaching up and down for three Years together. After which he returned back to *Damaſcus*, preached openly in the Synagogues, and convinced the *Jews* of *Chriſt*'s Meſſiahſhip, and the Truth of his Religion. Angry and enraged hereat, they reſolved his Ruin, which they knew no better Way to effect, than by exaſperating and incenſing the Civil Powers againſt him. They therefore applied to the Governor of *Damaſcus*, with crafty and cunning Inſinuations, perſuading him to apprehend St. *Paul*, poſſibly under the Notion of a Spy, there being War at this Time between the *Romans* and the King. Hereupon the Gates were ſhut and extraordinary Guards ſet, and all Engines that could be laid to take him. But the Diſciples, to prevent their cruel Deſigns, at Night put him into a Baſket, and let him down over the City Wall. And the Place, we are told, is ſtill ſhewed to Travellers, not far from the Gate, thence called *St. Paul's Gate* at this Day.

Having

HAVING thus made his Escape, he set forwards for *Jerusalem*, where when he arrived, he addressed himself to the Church: But they, having known the former Temper and Principles of the Man, universally shunned his Company; till *Barnabas* brought him to *Peter*, who was not yet cast into Prison, and to *James* our Lord's Brother, Bishop of *Jerusalem*, acquainting them with the Manner of his Conversion, and by them he was familiarly entertained. Here he stayed fifteen Days, preaching *Christ*, and confuting the *Hellenist Jews* with Courage and Resolution: But Snares were again laid to intrap him, as Malice can as well cease to be, as to be restless and active. Whereupon he was warned by God in a Vision, that his Testimony would not find Acceptance in that Place, that therefore he should leave it, and betake himself to the *Gentiles*. Accordingly being conducted by the Brethren to *Cesarea*, he sat sail for *Tarsus* his native City, from whence not long after he was fetched by *Barnabas* to *Antioch*, to assist him in propagating *Christianity* in that Place; in which Employment they continued there a whole Year. And now it was that the Disciples of the Christian Religion were at this Place first called *Christians*; according to the Manner of all other Institutions, who were wont to take their Denominations from the first Authors and Founders of them.

IT happened about this Time that a terrible Famine, foretold by *Agabus*, afflicted several Parts of the *Roman* Empire, but especially *Judea*: The Consideration whereof made the *Christians* at *Antioch* compassionate the Case of their suffering Brethren, and accordingly raised considerable Contributions for their Relief and Succour, which they sent to *Jerusalem* by the Hands of *Barnabas* and *Paul*, who having dispatched their Errand in that City went back to *Antioch*. Where while they were joining in the publick Exercises of their Religion, it was revealed to them by the Holy Ghost, that they should set apart *Paul* and

Barnabas to preach the Gospel in other Places. Which was done accordingly, and they by Prayer, Fasting, and Imposition of Hands, were immediately deputed for that Service. Hence they departed to *Seleucia*, and thence sailed to *Cyprus*, where at *Salamis*, a great City in that Island, they preached in the Synagogues of the *Jews*. Hence they removed to *Paphos*, the Residence of *Sergius Paulus* the Proconsul of the Island, a Man of great Wisdom and Prudence, but miserably seduced by the wicked Artifices of *Bar-Jesus*, a *Jewish* Impostor, who calling himself *Elymas*, or the *Magician*, vehemently opposed the Apostles, and kept the Proconsul from embracing the Faith. Nay, one who pretends to be ancient enough to know it, seems to intimate, that he not only spake, but wrote against St. *Paul*'s Doctrine, and the Faith of *Christ*. However, the Proconsul called for the Apostles, and St. *Paul* first takes *Elymas* to task, and having severely checked him for his malicious opposing of the Truth, told him, that the Divine Vengeance was now ready to seize upon him; upon which he was immediately struck blind.

After this Success in *Cyprus*, he went to *Perga* in *Pamphylia*, where taking *Titus* along with him, in the room of *Mark*, who was returned to *Jerusalem*, they went to *Antioch* the Metropolis of *Pisidia*: Where entering into the *Jewish* Synagogue on the *Sabbath-day*, after some Sections of the Law were read they were invited by the Rulers of the Synagogue to discourse a little to the People. Which St. *Paul* did in a large and eloquent Sermon, wherein he put them in Mind of the many great and particular Blessings which God had heaped upon the *Jews*, from the first Original of that Nation; that he had crowned them all with the sending of his Son to be the *Messiah* and the Saviour; that though the *Jews* had ignorantly crucified this just, innocent Person, yet that God, according to his own Predictions, had raised him up from the Dead;

Dead; that through him they preached Forgiveneſs of Sins; and that by him alone it was that Men, if ever, muſt be juſtified and acquitted from the Guilt and Condemnation, which all the pompous Ceremonies and Miniſtries of the *Moſaic* Law could never do away: That therefore they would do well to take Heed, leſt by their oppoſing this Way of Salvation, that ſhould bring upon themſelves the prophetical Curſe, which God had threatned to the *Jews* of old, for their great Contumacy and Neglect. This Sermon wanted not its due Effects; the Proſelyte *Jews* deſired the Apoſtles to diſcourſe again to them of this Matter, the next Sabbath-Day; the Apoſtles alſo perſuaded them to continue firm in the Belief of theſe Things. The Day was no ſooner come, but the whole City almoſt flocked to be their Auditors; which, when the *Jews* ſaw, actuated by a Spirit of Envy, they began to blaſpheme, and to contradict the Apoſtles; who nothing daunted, told them that our Lord had charged them firſt to preach the Goſpel to the *Jews*, which, ſince they ſo obſtinately rejected, they were to addreſs themſelves to the *Gentiles*, who hearing this rejoyced at the News, and magnified the Word of God; and as many of them as were thus prepared and diſpoſed towards eternal Life heartily cloſed with it, and embraced it; the Apoſtles preaching not there only, but through the whole Country round about. The *Jews* more exaſperated than before, reſolved to be rid of their Company; and to that End perſuaded ſome of the more devout and honourable Women, to deal with their Huſbands, Perſons of prime Rank and Quality in the City, by whoſe Means they were driven out of thoſe Parts. Whereat *Paul* and *Barnabas* ſhaking off the Duſt of their Feet, as a Teſtimony againſt their Ingratitude and Infidelity, departed from them.

The next Place they went to was *Iconium*, where at firſt they found kind Entertainment and good Succeſs,

Succeſs, God ſetting a Seal to their Doctrine by the Teſtimony of his Miracles. But here the *Jewiſh* Malice began again to ferment, exciting the People to Sedition and Mutiny againſt them; inſomuch that hearing of a Deſign to ſtone them, they ſeaſonaby withdrew to *Lyſtra*, where they firſt made their Way by a miraculous Cure. For St. *Paul* ſeeing an impotent Cripple that had been lame from his Mother's Womb, cured him with the ſpeaking of a Word. Here in a mighty Rage they fall upon St. *Paul*, ſtone him, as they thought, dead, and then drag him out of their City: Thither the *Chriſtians* of that Place coming, probably to inter him, he ſuddenly revived, and roſe up among them, and the next Day went thence to *Derbe*.

HERE they preached the Goſpel, and then returned to *Lyſtra*, *Iconium*, and *Antioch* of *Pyſidia*, confirming the *Chriſtians* of thoſe Places in the Belief and Profeſſion of *Chriſtianity*, earneſty perſuading them to perſevere, and not to be diſcouraged with thoſe Troubles and Perſecutions which they muſt expect would attend the Profeſſion of the Goſpel. And that all this might ſucceed the better, with Faſting and Prayer, they ordained Governors and Paſtors in every Church, and having recommended them to the Grace of God, departed from them. From thence they paſſed through *Piſidia*, and thence came to *Pamphylia*, and having preached to the People at *Perga*, they went down to *Attalia*. And thus having at this Time finiſhed the whole Circuit of their Miniſtry, they returned back to *Antioch* in *Syria*, the Place from whence they had firſt ſet out.

WHILE St. *Paul* ſtaid at *Antioch* there aroſe that famous Controverſy about the Obſervation of the *Moſaic* Rites, ſet on Foot and brought in by ſome *Jewiſh* Converts, that came down thither, whereby great Diſturbances and Diſtractions were made in the Minds of the People: For the compoſing whereof, the Church of *Antioch* reſolved to ſend *Paul* and

Barnabas

Barnabas to conſult with the Apoſtles and Church at *Jeruſalem*. Being come to *Jeruſalem*, they firſt addreſſed themſelves to *Peter*, *James* and *John*, the Pillars and principal Perſons in that Place; by whom they were kindly entertained, and admitted to the *Right-Hand of the Fellowſhip*. And perceiving by the Account which St. *Paul* gave them that the Goſpel of the Uncircumciſion was committed to him, as that of the Circumciſion was to *Peter*; they ratified it by a Compact and Agreement, that *Peter* ſhould preach to the *Jews*, and *Paul* unto the *Gentiles*. Hereupon a Council was ſummoned, wherein *Peter* having declared his Senſe of Things, *Paul* and *Barnabas* acquainted them what Things God, by their Miniſtry, had done among the *Gentiles*. The Iſſue of the Debate was, That the *Gentiles* were not under the Obligation of the Law of *Moſes*, and that therefore ſome Perſons of their own ſhould be joined with *Paul* and *Barnabas*, to carry the Canons and Decrees of the Council down to *Antioch*, for their fuller Satisfaction of this Matter.

St. *Paul* and his Companions having received the decretal Epiſtle, returned back to *Antioch*; where they had not been long before *Peter* came thither to them: And, according to the Decree of the Council, freely and inoffenſively converſed with the *Gentiles*, 'till ſome of the *Jews* coming down thither from *Jeruſalem*, he withdrew his Converſation, as if it were a Thing unwarrantable and unlawful. By which Means the Minds of many were diſſatified, and their Conſciences very much enſnared: Whereat St. *Paul* being exceedingly troubled, publickly rebuked him for it, and that, as the Caſe required, with great Sharpneſs and Severity. It was not long after, that St. *Paul* and *Barnabas* reſolved upon viſiting the Churches, which they had lately planted among the *Gentiles*: To which End *Barnabas* determined to take his Couſin *Mark* along with them; this *Paul* would by no Means agree to, he having deſerted

deſerted them in their former Journey. A little Spark, which yet kindled a great Feud and Diſſention between theſe two good Men, and aroſe to that Height, that in ſome Diſcontent they parted from each other. The Effect was, *Barnabas* taking his Nephew, went for *Cyprus*, his native Country, St. *Paul* made choice of *Silas*, and the Succeſs of his Undertaking being firſt recommended to the Divine Care and Goodneſs, they ſet forwards on their Journey.

THEIR firſt Paſſage was into *Syria* and *Cilicia*, confirming the Churches as they went along: And to that End they left with them Copies of the ſynodical Decrees lately ordained in the Council at *Jeruſalem*. Hence we may ſuppoſe it was that he ſet ſail for *Crete*, where he preached and propagated *Chriſtianity*, and conſtituted *Titus* to be the firſt Biſhop and Paſtor of that Iſland, whom he left there, to ſettle and diſpoſe thoſe Affairs, which the Shortneſs of his own Stay in thoſe Parts would not ſuffer him to do. Hence he returned back unto *Cilicia*, and came to *Lyſtra*, where he found *Timothy*, whoſe Father was a *Greek*, but his Mother a *Jewiſh* Convert, by whom he had been brought up under all the Advantages of a pious and religious Education, and eſpecially an incomparable Skill and Dexterity in the holy Scriptures.

FROM hence with his Company he paſſed through *Phrygia*, and the Country of *Galatia*, where he was entertained by them with as mighty a Kindneſs and Veneration, as if he had been an Angel immediately ſent from Heaven. And being, by Revelation, forbidden to go into *Aſia*, by a ſecond Viſion he was commanded to direct his Journey for *Macedonia*. And here it was that St. *Luke* joined himſelf to his Company, and became ever after his inſeparable Companion. Sailing from *Troas*, they arrived at of the Iſland of *Samothracia*, and thence to *Neapolis*, from whence they went to *Philippi*, the chief City that

that Part of *Macedonia*, and a *Roman* Colony; where he ſtaid ſome conſiderable Time to plant the *Chriſtian* Faith, and where his Miniſtry had more particular Succeſs on *Lydia*, a Purple-Seller, born at *Thyatira*, baptized together with her whole Family; and with her the Apoſtle ſojourned during his Reſidence in that Place. A little without this City there was a *Proſeucha*, as the *Syriac* renders it, an *Oratory* or *Houſe of Prayer*, whereto the Apoſtle and his Company uſed frequently to retire, for the Exerciſe of their Religion, and for preaching the Goſpel to thoſe that reſorted thither.

As they were going to this *Oratory*, they were often followed by a *Pythoneſs*, a Maid-Servant, acted by a Spirit of Divination, who openly cried out, That *theſe Men were the Servants of the moſt high God, who came to ſhew the Way of Salvation* to the World. So eaſily can Heaven extort a Teſtimony from the Mouth of Hell. But St. *Paul*, to ſhew how little he needed *Satan* to be his Witneſs, commanded the *Dæmon* to come out, which immediately left her. The evil Spirit thus thrown out of Poſſeſſion, preſently raiſed a Storm againſt the Apoſtles; for the Maſters of the Damſel, who uſed, by her diabolical Arts, to raiſe great Advantages to themſelves, being ſenſible that now their gainful Trade was ſpoiled, reſolved to be revenged on them that had ſpoiled it. Accordingly they laid hold on them, and dragg'd them before the Seat of Judicature, inſinuating to the Governors, that theſe Men were *Jews*, and ſought to introduce different Cuſtoms and Ways of Worſhip, contrary to the Laws of the *Roman* Empire. The Magiſtrates and People were ſoon agreed, the one to give Sentence, the other to ſet upon the Execution. In fine, they were ſtript, beaten, and then commanded to be thrown into Priſon, and the Goaler charged to keep them with all poſſible Care and Strictneſs; who, to make ſure of his Charge, thruſt them into the inner Dungeon,

and made their Feet faſt in the Stocks. At Midnight the Apoſtles were over-heard by their Fellow-priſoners, praying and ſinging Hymns to God. But after the ſtill Voice came the Tempeſt: An Earthquake ſuddenly ſhook the Foundations of the Priſon, the Doors flew open, and their Chains fell off. The Goaler awaking with this amazing Accident, concluded within himſelf, that the Priſoners were fled, and to prevent the Sentence of publick Juſtice, was going to lay violent Hands upon himſelf; which St. *Paul* eſpying, called out to him to hold his Hand, and told him they were all there: Who thereupon came in to them, and falling down before them, aſked them, *What he ſhould do to be ſaved?* They told him, there was no other Way of Salvation for him or his, than an hearty and ſincere embracing of the Faith of *Chriſt*. Early in the Morning the Magiſtrates ſent Officers privately to releaſe them; which the Apoſtles refuſed, telling them, that they were not only innocent Perſons, but *Romans*; that they had been illegally condemned and beaten, that therefore their Delivery ſhould be as publick as the Injury, and an open Vindication of their Innocency, and that they themſelves, that had ſent them thither, ſhould fetch them thence; for the *Roman* Government was very tender of the Lives and Liberties of its own Subjects, thoſe eſpecially that were free Denizons of *Rome*, every Injury offered to a *Roman* being looked upon as an Affront againſt the Majeſty of the whole People of *Rome*. Such a one might not be beaten, but to be ſcourged or bound, without being firſt legally heard and tried, was not only againſt the *Roman*, but the Laws of all Nations; and the more publick any Injury was, the greater was its Aggravation, and the Laws required a more ſtrict and ſolemn Reparation. St. *Paul*, who was a *Roman*, and very well underſtood the Laws and Privileges of *Rome*, inſiſted upon this, to the great ſtartling and affrighting of the Magiſtrates, who, ſenſible of their Error, came

to

to the Priſon, and intreated them to depart. Whereupon going to *Lydia*'s Houſe, and having ſaluted and encouraged the Brethren, they departed from that Place.

LEAVING *Philippi*, they came next to *Theſſalonica*, the Metropolis of *Macedonia*; where *Paul*, according to his Cuſtom, preſently went to the *Jewiſh* Synagogue, for three Sabbath-Days, reaſoning and diſputing with them, proving, from the Predictions of the *Old Teſtament*, that the *Meſſiah* was to ſuffer and to riſe again, and that the bleſſed *Jeſus* was this *Meſſiah*. Great Numbers, eſpecially of religious Proſelytes, were converted by his preaching; while, like the Sun that melts Wax, but hardens Clay, it wrought a quite contrary Effect in the unbelieving *Jews*, who preſently ſet themſelves to blow up the City into a Tumult and an Uproar, and miſſing St. *Paul*, (who had withdrawn himſelf) they fell foul upon *Jaſon*, in whoſe Houſe he lodged; repreſenting to the Magiſtrates, that they were Enemies to *Cæſar*, and ſought to undermine the Peace and Proſperity of the *Roman* Empire. At Night *Paul* and *Silas* were conducted by the Brethren to *Beræa*; where going to the Synagogue, they found the People of a more noble and generous, a more pliable and ingenuous Temper, ready to entertain the *Chriſtian* Doctrine, but yet not willing to take it merely upon the Apoſtle's Word, till they had firſt compared his preaching with what the Scripture ſaid of the *Meſſiah* and his Doctrine. And the Succeſs was anſwerable, in thoſe great Numbers that came over to them. But the *Jewiſh* Malice purſued them ſtill; for hearing at *Theſſalonica* what Entertainment they had found in this Place, they preſently came down, to exaſperate and ſtir up the People. To avoid which St. *Paul*, leaving *Silas* and *Timothy* behind him, thought good to withdraw himſelf from that Place.

FROM *Berœa* he went to *Athens*, one of the moſt renowned Cities in the World, excelling all others in Antiquity, Humanity and Learning.

WHILE St. *Paul* ſtaid at *Athens* in Expectation of *Silas* and *Timothy* to come to him, he went up and down to take a more curious View and Survey of the City; which he found miſerably overgrown with Superſtition and Idolatry; he took more particular Notice of one Altar inſcribed *To the Unknown God*: St. *Paul* took Occaſion to diſcourſe of the true, but to them, *Unknown God*. For the Philoſophers had before treated him with a great deal of Scorn and Deriſion, aſking, what that prating idle Fellow had to ſay to them? Others looking upon him as a Propagator of new and ſtrange Gods, becauſe he preached to them *Jeſus* and *the Reſurrection*, which they looked upon as two upſtart Deities, lately come into the World. Hereupon they brought him to the Place, where ſtood the famous Senate-Houſe of the *Areopagites*, and, according to the *Athenian* Humour, which altogether delighted in curious Novelties, running up and down the *Forum*, and Places of public Concourſe, to ſee any ſtrange Accident, or hear any new Report; they aſked him, what that new and ſtrange Doctrine, which he preached to them was? Whereupon, in a neat and elegant Diſcourſe he began to tell them, he had obſerved how much they were over-run with Superſtition; that their Zeal for Religion was indeed generous and commendable, but which miſerably over-ſhot its due Meaſures and due Proportions; and that he had taken Notice of an Altar among them, inſcribed *To the unknown God*; and therefore, in Compaſſion to their blind and miſguided Zeal, he would declare unto them the Deity which they ignorantly worſhipped; and that he was no other than the great God, the Creator of all Things, the ſupreme Governor and Ruler of the World, who was incapable of being confined within any Temple, or human Fabrick; that no

no Image could poſſibly be made as a proper Inſtrument to repreſent him truly; that he needed no Gifts or Sacrifices, being himſelf the Fountain from whence Life, Breath, and all other Bleſſings are derived to particular Beings; that from one common Original he had made the whole Race of Mankind, and had wiſely fixed and determined the Times and Bounds of their Habitation; and all to this End, that Man might be the more obliged to ſeek after him, and ſincerely to ſerve and worſhip him: If therefore God was our Creator, it was highly unreaſonable, to think that we could make any Image or Repreſentation of him: That it was too long already, that the divine Patience had borne with the Manners of Men, and ſuffered them to go on in their blind Idolatries, that now he expected a general Repentance and Reformation from the World, eſpecially having, by the publiſhing of the Goſpel, put out of all Diſpute the Caſe of a future Judgment, and particularly appointed the holy *Jeſus* to be the Perſon that ſhould ſentence and judge the World; by whoſe Reſurrection he had given ſufficient Evidence and Aſſurance of it. No ſooner had he mentioned the Reſurrection, but ſome of the Philoſophers mocked and derided him; others more gravely anſwered, that they would hear him again concerning this Matter. But his Diſcourſe, however ſcorned and ſlighted, did not wholly want its deſired Effect, and that upon ſome of the greateſt Quality and Rank among them; in the Number of whom was *Dionyſius*, one of the grave Senators and Judges of the *Areopagus*, and *Damaris*, whom the Ancients not improbably make his Wife.

AFTER his Departure from *Athens*, he went to *Corinth*, the Metropolis of *Greece*, and the Reſidence of the Proconſul of *Achaia*; where he found *Aquila* and *Priſcilla* lately come from *Italy*, baniſhed out of *Rome* by a Decree of *Claudius*; and they being of the ſame Trade and Profeſſion, wherein he had been educated in his Youth, he wrought together with them,

them, leſt he ſhould be unneceſſarily burthenſome unto any; which, for the ſame Reaſon, he did in ſome other Places. Hither, after ſome Time, *Silas* and *Timothy* came to him. In the Synagogues he frequently diſputed with the *Jews* and Proſelytes, reaſoning and proving, that *Jeſus* was the true *Meſſiah*. They, according to the Nature of the Men, made Head and oppoſed him, and what they could not conquer by Argument and Force of Reaſon, they endeavoured to carry by Noiſe and Clamour, mixed with Blaſphemies and Revilings, the laſt Refuges of an impotent and baffled Cauſe. Whereat to teſtify his Reſentment, he ſhook his Garments, and told them, ſince he ſaw them reſolved to pull down Vengeance and Deſtruction upon their own Heads, he for his Part was guiltleſs and innocent, and would henceforth addreſs himſelf unto the *Gentiles*. Accordingly he left them, and went into the Houſe of *Juſtus*, a religious Proſelyte, where, by his preaching, and the many Miracles which he wrought, he converted great Numbers to the Faith: Amongſt which were *Criſpus* the chief Ruler of the Synagogue, *Gaius*, and *Stephanus*, who, together with their Families, embraced the Doctrine of the Goſpel, and were baptized into the *Chriſtian* Faith.

About this Time, as is moſt probable, he wrote his firſt Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, *Silas*, and *Timothy* being lately returned from thence, and having done the Meſſage for which he had ſent them thither. While the Apoſtle was thus employed, the Malice of the *Jews* was no leſs at work againſt him, and univerſally combining together, they brought him before *Gallio* the Proconſul of the Province, elder Brother to the famous *Seneca*: Before him they accuſed the Apoſtle as an *Innovator* in Religion, that ſought to introduce a new Way of Worſhip, contrary to what was eſtabliſhed by the *Jewiſh* Law, and permitted by the *Roman* Powers. The Apoſtle was ready to have pleaded his own Cauſe, but the Proconſul

Proconſul told them, that had it been a Matter of Right or Wrong, that had fallen under the Cognizance of the Civil Judicature, it had been very fit and reaſonable that he ſhould have heard and determined the Caſe, but ſince the Controverſy was only concerning the Punctilio's and Niceties of their Religion, it was very improper for him to be a Judge in ſuch Matters. And when they ſtill clamoured about it, he threw out their Indictment, and commanded his Officers to drive them out of Court. Whereupon ſome of the Townſmen ſeized upon *Soſthenes*, one of the Rulers of the *Jewiſh* Conſiſtory, a Man active and buſy in this Inſurrection, and beat him even before the Court of Judicature, the Proconſul not at all concerning himſelf about it. A Year and a half St. *Paul* continued in this Place, and before his Departure thence, wrote his ſecond Epiſtle to the *Theſſalonians*, to ſupply the Want of his coming to them, which in his former he had reſolved on; and for which, in a Manner, he had engaged his Promiſe.

St. *Paul* having thus fully planted and cultivated the Church at *Corinth*, reſolved now for *Syria*. And taking along with him *Aquila* and *Priſcilla*, at *Cenchrea*, the Port and Harbour of *Corinth*. In his Paſſage into *Syria* he came to *Epheſus*, where he preached a while in the Synagogue of the *Jews*: And though deſired to ſtay with them, yet having reſolved to be at *Jeruſalem* at the *Paſſover*, he promiſed that at his Return he would come again to them. Sailing thence, he landed at *Ceſarea*, and thence went to *Jeruſalem*, where having viſited the Church, and kept the Feaſt, he went down to *Antioch*. Here having ſtaid ſome Time, he traverſed the Countries of *Galatia*, and *Phrygia*, confirming as he went, the new-converted *Chriſtians*, and ſo came to *Epheſus*; where, finding certain *Chriſtian* Diſciples, he enquired of them, whether, ſince their Converſion, they had received the miraculous Gifts

and

and Powers of the Holy Ghoſt. They told him, that the Doctrine which they had received had nothing in it of that Nature, nor had they ever heard that any ſuch extroardinary Spirit had of late been beſtowed upon the Church. Hereupon he farther enquired, unto what they had been baptized (the *Chriſtian* Baptiſm being adminiſtred in the Name of the Holy Ghoſt?) They anſwered, they had received no more than *John*'s Baptiſm; which though it obliged Men to Repentance, yet did it explicitly ſpeak nothing of the Holy Ghoſt, or its Gifts and Powers. To this the Apoſtle replied, that though *John*'s Baptiſm did openly oblige to nothing but Repentance, yet that it did implicitly acknowledge the whole Doctrine concerning *Chriſt* and the *Holy Ghoſt*. Whereto they aſſenting, were ſolemnly initiated by *Chriſtian* Baptiſm, and the Apoſtle laying his Hands upon them, they immediately received the Holy Ghoſt, in the Gift of Tongues, Prophecy, and other miraculous Powers conferred upon them.

AFTER this he entered into the *Jewiſh* Synagogues, where, for the firſt three Months, he contended and diſputed with the *Jews*, endeavouring with great Earneſtneſs and Reſolution to convince them of the Truth of thoſe Things that concerned the *Chriſtian* Religion. But when inſtead of Succeſs, he met with nothing but Refractorineſs and Infidelity, he left the Synagogue, and taking thoſe with him whom he had converted, inſtructed them, and others that had reſorted to him, in the School of one *Tyrannus*, a Place where Scholars were wont to be educated and inſtructed. In this Manner he continued for two Years together; in which Time the *Jews* and Proſelytes of the whole *Proconſular Aſia* had Opportunity of having the Goſpel preached to them. And becauſe Miracles are the cleareſt Evidence of a divine Commiſſion, and the moſt immediate Credentials of Heaven, thoſe which do nearlieſt affect our Senſes, and conſequently have the ſtrongeſt

ſtrongeſt Influence upon their Minds, therefore God was pleaſed to ratify the Doctrine which St. *Paul* delivered by great and miraculous Operations; and thoſe of ſomewhat a more peculiar and extraordinary Nature; inſomuch that he did not only heal thoſe that came to him, but if Napkins or Handkerchiefs were but touched by him, and applied unto the Sick, their Diſeaſes immediately vaniſhed, and the Demons or evil Spirits departed out of thoſe that were poſſeſſed by them.

About this Time it was that the Apoſtle writ his Epiſtle to the *Galatians*; for he had heard, that, ſince his Departure, corrupt Opinions had got in amongſt them, about the neceſſary Obſervation of the legal Rites, and that ſeveral Impoſtors were crept into that Church, who knew no better Way to undermine the Doctrine he had planted there, than by vilifying his Perſon, ſlighting him as an Apoſtle only at the ſecond-hand, not to be compared with *Peter*, *James*, and *John*, who had familiarly converſed with *Chriſt* in the Days of his Fleſh, and been immediately deputed by him.

During his Stay in this Place, an Accident happened, that involved him in great Trouble and Danger. *Epheſus*, above all the Cities of the *Eaſt*, was renowned for the famous Temple of *Diana*, one of the ſtatelieſt Temples of the World. But that which gave the greateſt Reputation to it, was an Image of *Diana* kept there, made of no very coſtly Materials, but which the crafty Prieſts perſuaded the People was beyond all human Artifice or Contrivance, and that it was immediately formed by *Jupiter*, and *dropt down from Heaven*, having firſt killed, or baniſhed the Artiſts that made it (as *Suidas* informs us) that the Cheat might not be diſcovered; by which Means they drew not *Epheſus* only, but the whole World into a mighty Veneration of it. Beſides there were within this Temple Multitudes of Silver Cabinets, or Chapelets, little

Shrines, made in Faſhion of the Temple, wherein was placed the Image of *Diana*. For the making of theſe holy Shrines, great Numbers of Silver-ſmiths were employed and maintained, among whom one *Demetrius* was a leading Man; who foreſeeing that if the *Chriſtian* Religion ſtill got Ground, their gainful Trade would ſoon come to nothing, preſently called together the Men of his Profeſſion, eſpecially thoſe whom he himſelf ſet on Work, told them, that now their Welfare and Livelihood were concerned, and that the Fortune of their Wives and Children lay at Stake; that it was plain that this *Paul* had perverted City and Country, and perſuaded the People that the Images which they made and worſhipped, were no real Gods; by which Means their Trade was not only like to fall to the Ground, but alſo the Honour and Magnificence of the great Goddeſs *Diana*, whom not *Aſia* only, but the whole World did worſhip and adore. Enraged with this Diſcourſe, they cried out with one Voice, that *Great was Diana of the Epheſians*. The whole City was preſently in an Uproar, and ſeizing upon two of St. *Paul*'s Companions, hurried them into the Theatre, probably with a Deſign to have caſt them to the wild Beaſts: St. *Paul* hearing of their Danger, would have ventured himſelf among them, had not the *Chriſtians*, nay, ſome even of the *Gentile* Prieſts, Governors of the popular Games and Sports, earneſtly diſſuaded him from it; well knowing that the People were reſolved, if they could meet with him, to throw him to the wild Beaſts, that were kept there for the Diverſion and Pleaſure of the People. And this doubtleſs he means, when elſewhere he tells us, that *he fought with Beaſts at* Epheſus, probably intending what the People deſigned, though he did not actually ſuffer; though the brutiſh Rage, the ſavage and inhuman Manners of this People did ſufficiently deſerve that the Cenſure and Character ſhould be fixed upon themſelves.

GREAT was the Confuſion of the Multitude, the major Part not knowing the Reaſon of the Concourſe. In which Diſtraction *Alexander*, a *Jewiſh* Convert, being thruſt forward by the *Jews*, to be queſtioned and examined about this Matter, he would accordingly have made his Apology to the People, intending no doubt to clear himſelf by caſting the whole Blame upon St. *Paul*; this being, very probably, that *Alexander* the Copperſmith, of whom our Apoſtle elſewhere complains, *That he did him much Evil, and greatly withſtood his Words*, and *whom he delivered over unto* Satan for his Apoſtaſy, for blaſpheming *Chriſt*, and reproaching *Chriſtianity*) but the Multitude perceiving him to be a *Jew*, and thereby ſuſpecting him to be one of St. *Paul*'s Aſſociates, began to raiſe an Outcry for near two Hours together, wherein nothing could be heard, but *Great is Diana of the Epheſians*. The Noiſe being a little over, the Recorder, a diſcreet and prudent Man, came out and calmly told them, That it was ſufficiently known to all the World, what a mighty Honour and Veneration the City of *Epheſus* had for the great Goddeſs *Diana*, and the famous Image which fell from Heaven, that therefore there needed not this Stir to vindicate and aſſert it; that they had ſeized Perſons, who were not guilty of Sacrilege or Blaſphemy towards their Goddeſs; that if *Demetrius* and his Company had any juſt Charge againſt them, the Courts were ſitting, and they might prefer their Indictment; or, if the Controverſy were about any other Matter, it might be referred to ſuch a proper Judicature as the Law appoints for the Determination of ſuch Caſes: That therefore they ſhould do well to be quiet, having done more than they could anſwer, if called in queſtion (as 'tis likely they would) there being no Cauſe ſufficient to juſtify that Day's riotous Aſſembly. With which prudent Diſcourſe he appeaſed and diſmiſſed the Multitude.

It was about this Time that St. *Paul* heard of ſome Diſturbance in the Church at *Corinth*, hatched and fomented by a Pack of falſe heretical Teachers, crept in among them, who endeavoured to draw them into Parties and Factions, by perſuading one Party to be for *Peter*, another for *Paul*, a third for *Apollos*, as if the Main of Religion conſiſted in being of this or that Determination, or in a warm active Zeal to decry and oppoſe whoever is not of our narrow Sect. By this Means Schiſms and Factions broke into the *Corinthian* Church, whereby many wild and extravagant Opinions, and ſome of them ſuch as undermined the fundamental Articles of *Chriſtianity*, were planted, and taken Root there; as the envious Man never fiſhes more ſucceſsfully than in troubled Waters. To cure theſe Diſtempers, St. *Paul* writes his firſt Epiſtle to them; wherein he ſmartly reproves them for their Schiſms and Parties, conjures them to Peace and Unity, corrects thoſe groſs Corruptions that were introduced among them, and particularly reſolves thoſe many Caſes and Controverſies, wherein they had requeſted his Advice and Counſel. Shortly after *Apollos* deſigning to go for *Crete*, by him, and *Zenas*, St. *Paul* ſends his Epiſtle to *Titus*, whom he had made Biſhop of that Iſland, and had left there for the Propagation of the Goſpel. Herein he fully inſtructs him in the Execution of his Office, how to carry himſelf, and what Directions he ſhould give to others, to all particular Ranks and Relations of Men, eſpecially thoſe who were to be advanced to Places of Office and Authority in the Church.

It was not long after the Tumult at *Epheſus*, when St. *Paul* having called the Church together, and conſtituted *Timothy* Biſhop of that Place, took his Leave, and departed by *Troas* for *Macedonia*. And at this Time it was, that, as he himſelf tells us, he *preached the Goſpel round about unto* Illyricum, ſince called *Sclavonia*, ſome Parts of *Macedonia* bordering on that Province. From *Macedonia* he returned back

back unto *Greece*, where he abode three Months, and met with *Titus*, lately come with great Contributions from the Church at *Corinth*: By whoſe Example he ſtirred up the Liberality of the *Macedonians*, who very freely, and ſomewhat beyond their Ability, contributed to the poor *Chriſtians* at *Jeruſalem*. From *Titus* he had an Account of the preſent State of the Church at *Corinth*; and by him, at his Return, together with St. *Luke*, he ſent his ſecond Epiſtle to them. During his three Months Stay in *Greece*, he went to *Corinth*, where he wrote his famous Epiſtle to the *Romans*, which he ſent by *Phœbe*, a Deaconeſs of the Church of *Cenchrea*, nigh *Corinth*.

ST. *PAUL* being now reſolved for *Syria*, to convey the Contributions to the Brethren at *Jeruſalem*, was a while diverted from that Reſolution, by a Deſign he was told of, which the *Jews* had to kill and rob him by the Way. Whereupon he went back into *Macedonia*, and ſo came to *Philippi*, and thence went to *Troas*, where having ſtaid a Week, on the *Lord's-day* the Church met together to receive the holy Sacrament. Here St. *Paul* preached to them, and continued his Diſcourſe till Midnight; the longer, probably, being the next Day to depart from them. The Length of his Diſcourſe, and the Time of the Night had cauſed ſome of his Auditors to be overtaken with Sleep and Drowzineſs, among whom a young Man called *Eutychus*, being faſt aſleep, fell down from the third Story, and was taken up dead, but was by St. *Paul* preſently reſtored to Life and Health. The Night being thus ſpent in holy Exerciſes, St. *Paul* in the Morning took his Leave, and went on Foot to *Aſſos*, a Seaport Town, whither he had ſent his Company by Sea. Thence they ſet ſail to *Mytilene*; from thence to *Samos*, and having ſtaid ſome little Time at *Trogyllium*, the next Day came to *Miletus*, not ſo much as putting in at *Epheſus*, becauſe the Apoſtle was reſolved,

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if poſſible, to be at *Jeruſalem* at the Feaſt of *Pentecoſt*.

At *Miletus* he ſent to *Epheſus*, to ſummon the Biſhops and Governors of that Church, who being come, he put them in mind with what Uprightneſs and Integrity, with what Affection and Humility, with how great Trouble and Danger, with how much Faithfulneſs to their Souls he had been converſant among them, and had preached the Goſpel to them, ever ſince his firſt Coming into thoſe Parts.

Departing from *Miletus*, they arrived at *Coos*, thence came to *Rhodes*, thence to *Patara*, thence to *Tyre*; where meeting with ſome *Chriſtians*, he was adviſed by thoſe among them, who had the Gift of Prophecy, that he ſhould not go up to *Jeruſalem*: With them he ſtaid a Week, and then going all together to the Shore, he kneeled down and prayed with them; and having mutually embraced one another, he went on board, and came to *Ptolemais*, where only ſaluting the Brethren, they came next Day unto *Ceſarea*. Here they lodged in the Houſe of *Philip* the Evangeliſt, one of the ſeven Deacons that were at firſt ſet apart by the Apoſtles, who had four Virgin-Daughters, all endued with the Gift of Prophecy. During their Stay in this Place, *Agabus*, a Chriſtian Prophet, came down hither, from *Judea*, who taking *Paul*'s Girdle, bound with it his own Hands and Feet, telling them, that by this external *Symbol* the Holy Ghoſt did ſignify and declare, that St. *Paul* ſhould be thus ſerved by the *Jews* at *Jeruſalem*, and he by them delivered over into the Hands of the *Gentiles*. Whereupon they all paſſionately beſought him, that he would divert his Courſe to ſome other Place. The Apoſtle aſked them, what they meant, by theſe compaſſionate Diſſuaſives, to add more Affliction to his Sorrow? That he was willing, and reſolved not only to be impriſoned, but, if need were, to die at *Jeruſalem* for the Sake of *Chriſt* and his Religion. Finding his Reſolution fixed and immove-

able

able, they importuned him no farther, but left the Event to the divine Will and Pleaſure. All Things being in Readineſs, they ſet forwards on their Journey, and being come to *Jeruſalem*, were kindly and joyfully entertained by the *Chriſtians* there.

THE Day after their Arrival, St. *Paul* and his Company went to the Houſe of St. *James* the Apoſtle, where the reſt of the Biſhops and Governors of the Church were met together; after mutual Salutations, he gave them a particular Account with what Succeſs God had bleſſed him in propagating *Chriſtianity* among the *Gentiles*; for which they all heartily bleſſed God.

ST. *PAUL* the next Day, going with ſome others into the Temple, the *Jews* laid violent Hands on him; but *Lyſias*, Commander of the *Roman* Garriſon reſcued him, and for his greater Security put him into the Caſtle of *Antonia*, yet binding him with Chains. This Uſage St. *Paul*, being a *Roman*, complained of as contrary to his Privilege, he having been born a free Denizon of the City of *Tarſus* in *Cilicia*. Which the Governor underſtanding he commanded *Paul*'s Chains to be knocked off. He examined him touching thoſe Things the High-Prieſts alledged againſt him; and finding him innocent, ſent him to *Ceſarea*, where he was tried before *Portius Feſtus*, when our Apoſtle thought proper to appeal unto *Ceſar*. Which if he had not done *Agrippa*, one of his Judges, was of Opinion, that he might have been releaſed; but the Appeal being once made, the Judge had then no Power, either to abſolve or condemn, the Cauſe being entirely reſerved to the Cognizance of that Superior, to whom the Criminal had appealed.

IT was now finally reſolved that St. *Paul* ſhould be ſent to *Rome*; in order whereunto he was, with ſome other Priſoners of Remark, committed to the Charge of *Julius*, Commander of a Company belonging unto the Legion of *Auguſtus*; accompanied in his Voyage by

by St. *Luke*, *Ariſtarchus*, *Trophimus*, and ſome others. In *September*, *Anno. Chr.* LVI. or as others, LVII. they went on board a Ship of *Adramyttium*, and ſailed to *Sidon*, where the Captain civilly gave the Apoſtle Leave to go aſhore to viſit his Friends, and refreſh himſelf: Hence to *Cyprus*, till they came to the *Fair-Havens*, a Place near *Myra*, a City of *Lyſia*. Here, Winter coming on, and St. *Paul* foreſeeing it would be a dangerous Voyage, perſuaded them to put in, and winter. But the Captain preferring the Judgment of the Maſter of the Ship, and eſpecially becauſe of the Incommodiouſneſs of the Harbour, reſolved, if poſſible, to reach *Phœnice*, a Port of *Crete*, and to winter there. But it was not long before they found themſelves diſappointed of their Hopes; for the calm *Southerly* Gale that blew before, ſuddenly changed into a ſtormy and bluſtering *North-Eaſt* Wind, which ſo bore down all before it, that they were forced to let the Ship drive at the Pleaſure of the Wind; but as much as might be, to prevent ſplitting, or running a-ground, they threw out a great Part of their Lading, and the Tackle of the Ship. Fourteen Days they remained in this deſperate and uncomfortable Condition, neither Sun nor Stars appearing for a great Part of the Time; the Apoſtle putting them in mind how ill adviſed they were in not taking his Counſel; howbeit they ſhould be of good Chear, for that the God whom he ſerved and worſhipped, had the laſt Night purpoſely ſent an Angel from Heaven, to let him know, that notwithſtanding the preſent Danger they were in, yet he ſhould be brought ſafe before *Nero*; that they ſhould be ſhipwreck'd indeed, and caſt upon an Iſland, but that for his Sake God had ſpared all in the Ship, not one whereof ſhould miſcarry; and that he did not doubt, but that it would accordingly come to paſs. On the fourteenth Night, upon ſounding, they found themſelves nigh ſome Coaſt; and therefore, to avoid Rocks, thought good to come to an Anchor, till the

the Morning might give them better Information. In the mean Time the Seamen (who beſt underſtood the Danger) were preparing to get into the Skiff, to ſave themſelves; which St. *Paul* eſpying, told the Captain, that unleſs they all ſtaid in the Ship, none could be ſafe; whereupon the Soldiers cut the Ropes, and let the Skiff fall off into the Sea. Between this and Day-break the Apoſtle adviſed them to eat and refreſh themſelves, having all this while kept no ordinary and regular Diet, aſſuring them they ſhould all eſcape. Himſelf firſt taking Bread, and having bleſſed God for it before them all, the reſt followed his Example, and chearfully fell to their Meat; which done, they lightned the Ship of what remained, and endeavoured to put into a Creek, which they diſcovered not far off: But falling into a Place where two Seas met, the Fore-part of the Ship ran a-ground, while the hinder Part was beaten in Pieces with the Violence of the Waves. Awakened with the Danger they were in, the Soldiers cried out to kill the Priſoners, to prevent their Eſcape; which the Captain, deſirous to ſave St. *Paul*, and probably in Confidence of what he had told them, refuſed to do; commanding, that every one ſhould ſhift for himſelf: The Iſſue was, that partly by ſwimming, partly on Planks, partly on Pieces of the broken Ship, they all, to the Number of two hundred threeſcore and ſixteen (the whole Number in the Ship) got ſafe to Shore.

The Iſland upon which they were caſt was *Melita* (now *Malta*) ſituate in the *Lybian* Sea, between *Syracuſe* and *Africk*. Here they found Civility among the *Barbarians*, and the plain Acknowledgments of a divine Juſtice imprinted upon the naked and untutored Notions of Mens Minds. The People treated them with great Humanity, entertaining them with all neceſſary Accommodations; but while St. *Paul* was throwing Sticks upon the Fire, a Viper, diſlodged by the Heat, came out of the Wood, and faſtened on his Hand. This the People no ſooner

eſpied, but preſently concluded, that ſurely he was ſome notorious Murderer, whom though the divine Vengeance had ſuffered to eſcape the Fury of the Sea, yet had it only reſerved him for a more publick and ſolemn Execution: But when they ſaw him ſhake it off into the Fire, and not preſently ſwell, and drop down, they changed their Opinions, and concluded him to be ſome God. So eaſily are light and credulous Minds tranſported from one Extreme to another. Not far off lived *Publius*, a Man of great Eſtate and Authority, and Governor of the Iſland, by him they were courteouſly entertained three Days at his own Charge; and his Father lying at that Time ſick of a Fever and a Dyſentery, St. *Paul* went in, and having prayed, and laid his Hands upon him, healed him; as he did alſo many of the Inhabitants, who by this Miracle were encouraged to bring their Diſeaſed to him: Whereby great Honours were heaped upon him, and both he and his Company furniſhed with Proviſions neceſſary for the reſt of their Voyage. Nay *Publius* himſelf is ſaid by ſome to have been hereby converted to the Faith, and by St. *Paul* to have been conſtituted Biſhop of that Iſland, and that this was he that ſucceeded St. *Denys* the *Areopagite* in the See of *Athens*, and was afterwards crowned with Martyrdom.

After three Months Stay in this Iſland, they went aboard the *Caſtor* and *Pollux*, a Ship of *Alexandria*, bound for *Italy*. At *Syracuſe* they put in, and ſtaid three Days; thence ſailed to *Rhegium*, and ſo to *Puteoli*, where they landed, and finding ſome *Chriſtians* there, ſtaid a Week with them, and then ſet forward on their Journey to *Rome*. The *Chriſtians* at *Rome* having heard of their Arrival, ſeveral of them came Part of the Way to meet them, ſome as far as the *Three Taverns*, a Place thirty-three Miles from *Rome*, others as far as the *Appii Forum*, fifty-one Miles diſtant thence. Great was their mutual Salutation, and the Encouragement which the Apoſtle received by it, glad, no doubt, to ſee that *Chriſtians* found ſo much

much Liberty at *Rome*. By them he was conducted in a kind of Triumph into the City, where, when they were arrived, the reſt of the Priſoners were delivered to the Captain of the Guard, and by him diſpoſed in the common Goal, while St. *Paul* (probably at *Julius* his Requeſt and Recommendation) was permitted to ſtay in a private Houſe, only with a Soldier to ſecure and guard him.

The firſt Thing St. *Paul* did after he came to *Rome*, was to ſummon the Heads of the *Jewiſh* Conſiſtory there, whom he acquainted with the Cauſe and Manner of his Coming; that though he had been guilty of no Violation of the Law of their Religion, yet had he been delivered by the *Jews* into the Hands of the *Roman* Governors, who would have acquitted him once and again as innocent of any capital Offence, but by the Perverſeneſs of the *Jews* he was forced, not with an Intention to charge his own Nation (already ſufficiently odious to the *Romans*) but only to vindicate and clear himſelf, to make his Appeal to *Cæſar*; that being come, he had ſent for them, to let them know, that it was for his conſtant aſſerting the *Reſurrection*, the Hope of all true *Iſraelites*, that he was bound with that Chain which they ſaw upon him. The *Jews* replied, that they had received no Advice concerning him, nor had any of the Nation that came from *Judea*, brought any Charge againſt him; only for the Religion which he had eſpouſed, they deſired to be a little better informed about it, it being every where decried both by *Jew* and *Gentile*. Accordingly, upon a Day appointed, he diſcourſed to them from Morning to Night concerning the Religion and Doctrine of the Holy *Jeſus*, proving from the Promiſes and Predictions of the *Old Teſtament*, that he was the true *Meſſiah*. His Diſcourſe ſucceeded not with all alike, ſome being convinced, others perſiſting in their Infidelity: And as they were departing in ſome Diſcontent with each other, the Apoſtle told them, it was now too plain, God had accompliſhed

upon them the prophetical Curſe, of being left to their wilful Hardneſs and Impenitency, to be blind at Noon-day, and to run themſelves againſt all Means and Methods into irrecoverable Ruin: That ſince the Caſe was thus with them, they muſt expect, that henceforth he ſhould turn his Preaching to the *Gentiles*, who would be moſt ready to entertain, what they had ſo ſcornfully rejected, the glad Tidings of the Goſpel.

It was not, probably, long after this, that he was brought to his firſt Hearing before the Emperor, where thoſe Friends, whom he moſt expected ſhould ſtand by him, plainly deſerted him, afraid it ſeems of appearing in ſo tickliſh a Cauſe before ſo unreaſonable a Judge, who governed himſelf by no other Meaſures than the brutiſh and extravagant Pleaſure of his Luſt or Humour. But God ſtood by him, and encouraged him; as indeed divine Conſolations are many Times then neareſt to us, when human Aſſiſtances are fartheſt from us. This Cowardice of theirs the Apoſtle had a Charity large enough to cover, heartily praying, that it might not be brought in againſt them them in the Accounts of the great Day. Two Years he dwelt at *Rome* in an Houſe which he had hired for his own Uſe, wherein he conſtantly employed himſelf in preaching and writing for the Good of the Church. He preached daily, without Interruption, to all that came to him, and with good Succeſs; yea, even upon ſome of the better Rank and Quality, and thoſe belonging to the Court itſelf.

Amongst others of our Apoſtle's Converts at *Rome* was *Oneſimus*, who had formerly been Servant to *Philemon*, a Perſon of Eminency in *Coloſſe*; but had run away from his Maſter, and taken Things of ſome Value with him. Having rambled as far as *Rome*, he was now converted by St. *Paul*, and by him returned with recommendatory Letters to *Philemon* his Maſter to beg his Pardon, and that he might be received into Favour, being now of a much bet-

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ter Temper, more faithful and diligent, and uſeful to his Maſter than he had been before. Imbibed with theſe Principles, *Oneſimus* is again returned unto his Maſter; and being thus improved, St. *Paul* the more confidently begged him Pardon. And indeed had not *Philemon* been a *Chriſtian*, and by the Principles of his Religion both diſpoſed and obliged to Mildneſs and Mercy, there had been great Reaſon why St. *Paul* ſhould be thus importunate with him for *Oneſimus*'s Pardon, the Caſe of Servants in thoſe Days being very hard; for all Maſters were looked upon as having unlimited Power over their Servants, and that not only by the *Roman*, but by the Laws of all Nations, whereby without aſking the Magiſtrate's Leave, or any publick and formal Trial, they might adjudge and condemn them to what Work or Puniſhment they pleaſed, even to the taking away of Life itſelf. But the Severity and Exorbitancy of this Power was afterwards ſomewhat curbed by the Laws of ſucceeding Emperors, eſpecially after the Empire ſubmitted itſelf to *Chriſtianity*, which makes better Proviſion for Perſons in that Capacity and Relation, and in Caſe of unjuſt and over-rigorous Uſage, enables them to appeal to a more righteous impartial Tribunal, where Maſter and Servant ſhall both ſtand upon even Ground, *where he that doth Wrong ſhall receive for the Wrong which he hath done; and there is no Reſpect of Perſons.*

The *Chriſtians* at *Philippi* having heard of St. *Paul*'s Impriſonment at *Rome*, and not knowing what Straits he might be reduced to, raiſed a Contribution for him, and ſent it by *Epaphroditus* their Biſhop; who being now come to *Rome*, he ſhortly after fell dangerouſly ſick: But being recovered, and upon the Point to return, by him St. *Paul* ſent his Epiſtle to the *Philippians*, wherein he gives them ſome Account of the State of Affairs at *Rome*, gratefully acknowledges their Kindneſs to him, and warns them of thoſe dangerous Opinions, which the *Judaizing* Teachers

Teachers began to vent among them. The Apoſtle had heretofore for ſome Years lived at *Epheſus*, and perfectly underſtood the State and Condition of that Place; and therefore now by *Tychicus* writes his Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, endeavouring to countermine the Principles and Practices both of the *Jews* and *Gentiles*; to confirm them in the Belief and Obedience of the *Chriſtian* Doctrine; to repreſent the infinite Riches of the divine Goodneſs, in admitting the *Gentile* World to the unſearchable Treaſures of *Chriſtianity*; eſpecially preſſing them to expreſs the Life and Spirit of it in the general Duties of Religion, and in the Duties of their particular Stations. Much about the ſame Time, or a little after, he wrote his Epiſtle to the *Coloſſians*, where he had never been, and ſent it by *Epaphras*, who for ſome Time had been his Fellow-priſoner at *Rome*. The Deſign of it is, for the greateſt Part, the ſame with that to the *Epheſians*, to ſettle and confirm them in the Faith of the Goſpel, againſt the Errors both of *Judaiſm*, and the ſuperſtitious Obſervances of the *Heathen* World, ſome whereof had taken Root amongſt them.

It is not improbable but that about this, or rather ſome conſiderable Time before St. *Paul* wrote his ſecond Epiſtle to *Timothy*. The only Thing that can be levelled againſt this is, that in his Epiſtle to *Timothy*, he tells him, that he had ſent *Tychicus* to *Epheſus*, by whom 'tis plain that the Epiſtles to the *Epheſians* and *Philippians* were diſpatched; and that therefore this to *Timothy* muſt be written after them. But I ſee no Inconvenience to affirm, that *Tychicus* might come to *Rome* preſently after St. *Paul*'s Arrival there, he by him immediately ſent back to *Epheſus* upon ſome emergent Affair of that Church; and, after his Return to *Rome*, he ſent with him thoſe Epiſtles.

As for the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, 'tis very uncertain when, or whence, and (for ſome Ages doubted) by whom 'twas written. *Euſebius* tells us, 'twas not

not received by many, becauſe rejected by the Church of *Rome*, as none of St. *Paul's* genuine Epiſtles. *Origen* affirms the Style of it to be more fine and elegant, and to contain in it a richer Vein of purer *Greek*, than is uſually found in St. *Paul's* Epiſtles; as every one that is able to judge of a Style, muſt needs confeſs: That the Sentences indeed are grave and weighty, and ſuch as breathe the Spirit and Majeſty of an Apoſtle: That therefore 'twas his Judgment, that the Matter contained in it had been dictated by ſome Apoſtle, but that it had been put into Phraſe, Form, and Order, by ſome other Perſon that did attend upon him: That if any Church owned it for St. *Paul's*, they were not to be condemned, it not being without Reaſon by the Antients aſcribed to him; though God only knew who was the true Author of it. He farther tells us, that Report had handed it down to his Time, that it had been compoſed partly by *Clemens* of *Rome*, and partly by *Luke* the Evangeliſt. *Tertullian* adds, that it was writ by *Barnabas*. What ſeems moſt likely in ſuch Variety of Opinions is, that St. *Paul* originally wrote it in *Hebrew*, it being to be ſent to the *Jews* his Countrymen, and by ſome other Perſon, probably St. *Luke*, or *Clemens Romanus*, tranſlated into *Greek*; eſpecially ſince both *Euſebius* and St. *Jerom* obſerved of old ſuch a great Affinity both in Style and Senſe between this and *Clement's* Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, as thence poſitively to conclude him to be the Tranſlator of it. 'Twas written, as we may conjecture, a little after he was yet in ſome Parts of *Italy*, whence he dates his Salutations.

Our Apoſtle being now, after two Years Cuſtody, perfectly reſtored to Liberty, remembered that he was *the Apoſtle of the Gentiles*, and had therefore a larger Dioceſe than *Rome*, and accordingly prepared himſelf for a greater Circuit; though which Way he directed his Courſe, is not abſolutely certain. By ſome he is ſaid to have returned back

back into *Greece*, and the Parts of *Aſia*, upon no other Ground, that I know of, than a few Intimations in ſome of his Epiſtles, that he intended to do ſo. By others he is thought to have preached both in the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern* Parts, which is not inconſiſtent with the Time he had after his Departure from *Rome*. But of the latter we have better Evidence; for *Clemens*, who was cotemporary and Fellow-labourer with St. *Paul*, in his famous Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, expreſly tells us, that being a Preacher both in the *Eaſt* and the *Weſt*, he taught Righteouſneſs to the whole World, and went to *the utmoſt Bounds of the Weſt*: Which makes me the more wonder at the Confidence of one (otherwiſe a Man of great Parts and Learning) who ſo peremptorily denies that ever our Apoſtle preached in the *Weſt*, merely becauſe there are no Monuments left, in primitive Antiquity, or of any particular Churches founded by him: As if all the particular Paſſages of Life, done at ſo vaſt a Diſtance, muſt needs have been recorded, or thoſe Records have come down to us, when it is ſo notoriouſly known, that almoſt all the Writings and Monuments of thoſe firſt Ages of *Chriſtianity*, are long ſince periſhed; or, as if we were not ſufficiently aſſured of the Thing in general, though not of what Particular he did there. Probably it is, that he went into *Spain*; a Thing which himſelf tells us he formerly once and again reſolved on: Certain it is, that the Antients do generally aſſert it, without ſeeming in the leaſt to doubt of it. *Theodoret* and others, tell us, that he preached not only in *Spain*, but that he went to other Nations, and brought the Goſpel into the *Iſles of the Sea*, by which he undoubtedly means *Britain*, and therefore elſewhere reckons the *Gauls* and *Britains* among the Nations, which the Apoſtles, and particularly the *Tent-maker* perſuaded to embrace the Law of *Chriſt*. Nor is he the only Man that has ſaid it, others having given in their Teſtimony and Suffrage in this Caſe.

To

To what other Parts of the World St. *Paul* preached the Goſpel, we find no certain Footſteps in Antiquity, nor any farther Mention of him, till his Return to *Rome*, which probably was about the eighth or ninth Year of *Nero*'s Reign. Here he met with *Peter*, and was together with him thrown into Priſon, no doubt in the general Perſecution raiſed againſt the *Chriſtians*, under the Pretence that they had fired the City. Beſides the general, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe there were particular Cauſes of his Impriſonment. Some of the Ancients make him engaged with *Peter* in procuring the Fall of *Simon Magus*, and that that derived the Emperor's Fury and Rage upon him: St. *Chryſoſtom* gives this Account; that having converted one of *Nero*'s Concubines, a Woman of whom he was infinitely fond, and reduced her to a Life of great Strictneſs and Chaſtity, ſo that now ſhe wholly refuſed to comply with his wanton and impure Embraces; the Emperor ſtormed hereat, called the Apoſtle a Villain and Impoſtor, a wretched Perverter and Debaucher of others, giving Orders that he ſhould be caſt into Priſon, and when he ſtill perſiſted to perſuade the Lady to continue her chaſte and pious Reſolutions, commanded him to be put to Death.

How long he remained in Priſon, is not certainly known; at laſt his Execution was reſolved on; what his preparatory Treatment was, whether he was ſcourged, as Malefactors were wont to be, in order to their Death, we find not. As a *Roman* Citizen, by the *Valerian* and *Porcian* Law, he was exempted from it, though by the Law of the Twelve Tables, notorious Malefactors, condemned by the *Centuriate* Aſſemblies, were firſt to be ſcourged, and then put to Death: And *Baronius* tells us, that in the Church of St. *Mary beyond the Bridge*, in *Rome*, the Pillars are yet extant to which both *Peter* and *Paul* are ſaid to have been bound and ſcourged. As he was led to Execution, he is ſaid to have converted three of the

Soldiers that were ſent to conduct and guard him; who, within a few Days after, by the Emperor's Command, became Martyrs for the Faith. Being come to the Place, which was the *Aquæ Salviæ*, three Miles from *Rome*; after ſome ſolemn Preparation, he chearfully gave his Neck to the fatal Stroke. As a *Roman* he might not be put upon the Croſs, too infamous a Death for any but the worſt of Slaves and Malefactors, and therefore beheading was accounted a more noble Kind of Death, not among the *Romans* only, but among other Nations, as being fitter for Perſons of better Quality, and more ingenuous Education: And from this Inſtrument of his Execution, the Cuſtom, no doubt, firſt aroſe, that in all Pictures and Images of this Apoſtle, he is conſtantly repreſented with a Sword in his Right-Hand. Tradition reports (juſtified herein, by the Suffrage of many of the Fathers) that when he was beheaded, a Liquor more like Milk than Blood, flowed from his Veins, and ſpirted upon the Clothes of his Executioner; and St. *Chryſoſtom* adds, that it became a Means of converting his Executioner, and many more to the Faith; and that the Apoſtle ſuffered in the ſixty-eighth Year of his Age. Some Queſtion there is, whether he ſuffered at the ſame Time with *Peter*: Many of the Ancients poſitively affirm, that both ſuffered on the ſame Day and Year; but others, though allowing the ſame Day, tell us, that St. *Paul* ſuffered not till the Year after, nay, ſome interpoſe the Diſtance of ſeveral Years. A Manuſcript Writing of the Lives and Travels of *Peter* and *Paul*, brought, amongſt other venerable Monuments of Antiquity out of *Greece*, will have *Paul* to have ſuffered no leſs than five Years after *Peter*, which he juſtifies by the Authority of no leſs than *Juſtin Martyr*, and *Irenæus*. But what Credit is to be given to this nameleſs Author, I ſee not, and therefore lay no Weight upon it, nor think it fit to be put into the Balance with the Teſtimonies of the Ancients. Certainly, if he ſuf-

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fered not at the very ſame Time with *Peter*, it could not be long after, not above a Year at moſt. The beſt is, which of them ſoever ſtarted firſt, they both came at laſt to the ſame End of the Race, to thoſe Palms and Crowns which are reſerved for all good Men in Heaven, but moſt eminently for the Martyrs of the *Chriſtian* Faith.

He was buried in the *Via Oſtienſis*, about two Miles from *Rome*, over whoſe Grave about the Year CCCXVIII. *Conſtantine the Great*, at the Inſtance of Pope *Sylveſter*, built a ſtately Church, within a Farm which *Lucina*, a noble *Chriſtian* Matron of *Rome* had long before ſettled upon that Church: He adorned it with an hundred of the beſt Marble Columns, and beautified it with the moſt exquiſite Workmanſhip; the many rich Gifts and Endowments which he beſtowed upon it, being particularly ſet down in the Life of *Sylveſter*.

Though we have drawn St. *Paul* at large, in the Account we have given of his Life, yet may it be of uſe to repreſent him a little, in a brief Account of his Perſon, Parts, and thoſe Graces and Virtues, for which he was more peculiarly eminent and remarkable: For his Perſon, we find it thus deſcribed. He was low, and of little Stature, and ſomewhat ſtooping, his Complexion fair, his Countenance grave, his Head ſmall, his Eyes carrying a Kind of Beauty and Sweetneſs in them, his Eye-brows a little hanging over, his Noſe long, but gracefully bending, his Beard thick, and like the Hair of his Head, mixed with grey Hairs. Somewhat of this Deſcription may be learnt from *Lucian*, when in the Perſon of *Trypho*, one of St. *Paul*'s Diſciples, he calls him by way of Deriſion, *high-noſed*, *bald-pated Galilean*, that was caught up through the Air unto the third Heaven. He ſeems to have enjoyed no very firm and athletick Conſtitution, being often ſubject to Diſtempers; St. *Hierom* particularly reports, that he was frequently afflicted with the Head-ach, and

that this was thought by many to have been *the Thorn in the Fleſh, the Meſſenger of Satan ſent to buffet him*; and that probably he intended ſome ſuch Thing, by *the Temptation in his Fleſh*, which he elſewhere ſpeaks of; which, however, it may in general ſignify thoſe Afflictions that came upon him, yet does it primarily denote thoſe Diſeaſes and Infirmities that he was obnoxious to.

But how mean ſoever the Cabinet was, there was a Treaſure within more precious and valuable, as will appear, if we ſurvey the Accompliſhments of his Mind. For as to natural Abilities and Endowments, he ſeems to have had a clear and ſolid Judgment, quick Invention, and a prompt and ready Memory; all which were abundantly improved by Art, and the Advantages of a moſt liberal Education.

Great was his Temperance and Sobriety, ſo far from going beyond the Bounds of Regularity, that he abridged himſelf of the Conveniences of lawful and neceſſary Accommodations; frequent where his Hungrings and Thirſtings, not conſtrained only, but voluntarily; it is probably thought that he very rarely drank any Wine, certain, that by Abſtinence and Mortification he *kept under and ſubdued his Body*, reducing the Extravagancy of the ſenſual Appetites to a perfect Subjection to the Laws of Reaſon.

His Kindneſs and Charity was truly admirable; he had a compaſſionate Tenderneſs for the Poor, and a quick Senſe of the Wants of others. To what Church ſoever he came, it was one of his firſt Cares to make Proviſion for the Poor, and to ſtir up the Bounty of the Rich and Wealthy; nay, himſelf worked often with his own Hands, not only to maintain himſelf, but to help and relieve them. But infinitely greater was his Charity to the Souls of Men, fearing no Dangers, refuſing no Labours, going through good and evil Report, that he might gain Men over to the Knowledge of the Truth, reduce them

them out of the crooked Paths of Vice and Idolatry, and ſet them in the right Way to eternal Life.

His Patience will yet farther appear from the Conſideration of another, the laſt of thoſe Virtues we ſhall take Notice of in him, his Conſtancy and Fidelity in the Diſcharge of his Place, and in the Profeſſion of Religion. Could the Powers and Policies of Men and Devils, Spite and Oppoſitions, Torments and Threatnings have been able to baffle him out of that Religion wherein he had engaged himſelf, he muſt have ſunk under them, and left his Station; but his Soul was ſteeled with a Courage and Reſolution that was impenetrable, and which no Temptation, either from Hopes or Fears could make any more Impreſſion upon, than an Arrow can that's ſhot againſt a Wall of Marble.

It is not the leaſt Inſtance of his Care and Fidelity in his Office, that he did not only preach and plant *Chriſtianity* in all Places whither he came; but what he could not perſonally do, he ſupplied by Writing. Fourteen Epiſtles he left upon Record, by which he was not only inſtrumental in propagating the *Chriſtian* Religion at firſt, but alſo in all the ſucceeding Ages of the Church.

CHAP. VII.

The LIFE *of St.* ANDREW.

THE ſacred Story, which has hitherto been very large and copious in deſcribing the Acts of the two firſt Apoſtles, is henceforward very ſparing in its Accounts, giving us only now and then a few oblique and accidental Remarks concerning the reſt; and ſome of them no farther mentioned, than the mere recording of their Names.

AMONG the Apoſtles that ſucceed, we firſt take Notice of St. *Andrew*; he was born at *Bethſaida*, a City of *Galilee*, ſtanding upon the Banks of the Lake of *Genneſareth*, Son to *John* or *Jonas*, a Fiſherman of that Town; he was Brother to *Simon Peter*, but whether elder or younger, the Antients do not clearly decide, though the major Part intimate him to have been the younger Brother, there being only the ſingle Authority of *Epiphanius* on the other Side, as we have formerly noted. He was brought up to his Father's Trade, whereat he laboured, till our Lord called him from catching *Fiſh*, to be a *Fiſher of Men*.

JOHN the Baptiſt was lately riſen in the *Jewiſh* Church, a Perſon, whom for his Efficacy and Impartiality of his Doctrine, and the extraordinary Strictneſs and Auſterities of his Life, the *Jews* generally had in great Veneration. He trained up his Proſelytes under the Diſcipline of Repentance, and by urging upon them a ſevere Change and Reformation

formation of Life, prepared them to entertain the Doctrine of the *Meſſiah*, whoſe Approach he told them, was now near at Hand, repreſenting to them the Greatneſs of his Perſon, and Importance of the Deſign that he was come upon. Beſide the Multitudes that promiſcuouſly flock'd to the *Baptiſt*'s Diſcourſes, he had, according to the Manner of the *Jewiſh* Maſters, ſome peculiar and ſelect Diſciples, who more conſtantly attended upon his Lectures, and for the moſt Part waited upon his Perſon. In the Number of theſe was our Apoſtle, who was then with him about *Jordan*, when our Saviour, who ſome Time before had been baptized, came that Way; upon whoſe Approach the *Baptiſt* told them, that this was the *Meſſiah*, the great Perſon whom he had ſo often ſpoken of, to uſher in whoſe Appearing his whole Miniſtry was but ſubſervient, that this was *the Lamb of God*, the true Sacrifice that was to expiate the Sins of Mankind. Upon this Teſtimony *Andrew* and another Diſciple (probably St. *John*) followed our Saviour to the Place of his Abode. Upon which Account he is generally, by the Fathers and antient Writers ſtiled *the firſt called Diſciple*, though in a ſtrict Senſe he was not ſo; for though he was the firſt of the Diſciples that came to *Chriſt*, yet was he not called till afterwards. After ſome Converſe with him, *Andrew* goes to acquaint his Brother *Simon*, and both together came to *Chriſt*: Long they ſtaid not with him, but returned to their own Home, and to the Exerciſe of their Calling wherein they were employed; when ſomewhat more than a Year after, our Lord paſſing through *Galilee*, found them fiſhing upon the Sea of *Tiberias*, where he fully ſatisfied them of the Greatneſs and Divinity of his Perſon, by the convictive Evidence of that miraculous Draught of Fiſhes, which they took at his Command. And now he told them he had other Work for them to do, that they ſhould no longer deal in Fiſh, but with Men, whom they ſhould catch

catch with the Efficacy and Influence of that Doctrine that he was come to deliver to the World; commanding them to follow him, as his immediate Disciples and Attendants, who accordingly left all and followed him. Shortly after St. *Andrew*, together with the reſt, was called to the Office and Honour of the Apoſtolate, and made Choice of to be one of thoſe that were to be *Chriſt*'s immediate Vicegerents for planting and propagating the *Chriſtian* Faith. Little is particularly recorded of him in the ſacred Story, being comprehended in the general Account of the reſt of the Apoſtles.

After our Lord's Aſcenſion into Heaven, and that the Holy Ghoſt had, in its miraculous Powers been plentifully ſhed upon the Apoſtles, to fit them for the great Errand they were to go upon, to root out Profaneneſs and Idolatry, and to ſubdue the World to the Doctrine of the Goſpel, it is generally affirmed by the Ancients, that the Apoſtles agreed among themſelves (by Lot, ſay ſome) probably not without the ſpecial Guidance and Direction of the Holy Ghoſt, what Parts of the World they ſhould ſeverally take. In this Diviſion St. *Andrew* had *Scythia* and the neighbouring Countries, primarily allotted him for his Province. Firſt then he travelled through *Cappadocia*, *Galatia* and *Bithynia*, and inſtructed them in the Faith of *Chriſt*, paſſing all along the *Euxine* Sea, and ſo into the Solitudes of *Scythia*. An ancient Author (though whence deriving his Intelligence I know not) gives us a more particular Account of his Travels and Tranſactions in theſe Parts: He tells us, that he firſt came to *Amynſus*, where being entertained by a *Jew*, he went into the Synagogue, diſcourſed to them concerning *Chriſt*, and from the Prophecies of the *Old Teſtament* proved him to be the *Meſſiah*, and the Saviour of the World. Having here converted and baptized many, ordered their publick Meeting, and ordained them Prieſts, he went next to *Trapezus*, a maritime City upon the

Euxine

Euxine Sea, whence, after many other Places, he came to *Nice*, where he ſtaid two Years, preaching and working Miracles with great Succeſs; thence to *Nicomedia*, and ſo to *Chalcedon*; whence, ſailing through the *Propontis* he came by the *Euxine* Sea to *Heraclea*, and from it to *Ameſtris:* In all which Places he met with great Difficulties and Diſcouragements, but overcame all with an inviſible Patience and Reſolution. He next came to *Synope*, a City ſituate upon the ſame Sea, a Place famous both for the Birth and Burial of the great King *Mithridates*; here, as our Author reports from the Ancients, he met with his Brother *Peter*, with whom he ſtaid a conſiderable Time at this Place: As a Monument whereof he tells us, that the Chairs, made of white Stone, wherein they were wont to ſit while they taught the People, were ſtill extant, and commonly ſhewn in his Time. The Inhabitants of this City were moſt *Jews*, who partly through Zeal for their Religion, partly through the Barbarouſneſs of their Manners, were quickly exaſperated againſt the Apoſtle, and contriving together, attempted to burn the Houſe wherein he ſojourned: However they treated him with all the Inſtances of ſavage Cruelty, throwing him to the Ground, ſtamping upon him with their Feet, pulling and dragging him from Place to Place, ſome beating him with Clubs, others pelting him with Stones; and ſome, the better to ſatisfy their Revenge, biting off his Fleſh with their Teeth; till apprehending they had fully diſpatched him, they caſt him out of the City. But he miraculouſly recovered, and publickly returned into the City, whereby, and by ſome other Miracles, which he wrought amongſt them, he reduced many to a better Mind, converting them to the Faith. Departing hence, he went again to *Amynſus*, and then to *Trapezus*, thence to *Neocæſarea*; and to *Samoſata* where having baffled the acute and wiſe Philoſophers, he purpoſed to return to *Jeruſalem*. Thence after ſome Time he be-

took himſelf to his former Provinces, travelling into the Country of the *Abaſgi*, where, at *Sebaſtople*, ſituate upon the *Eaſtern* Shore of the *Euxine* Sea, between the Influx of the Rivers *Phaſis* and *Apſarus*, he ſucceſsfully preached the Goſpel to the Inhabitants of that City. Hence he removed to the Country of the *Zecchi*, and the *Boſphorani*, Part of the *Aſiatick Scythia* or *Sarmatia*, but finding the Inhabitants very barbarous and intractable, he ſtaid not long among them, only at *Cherſon*, or *Cherſoneſus*, a great and populous City within the *Boſphorus*, he continued ſome Time, inſtructing and confirming them in the Faith. Hence taking Ship he ſailed croſs the Sea to *Synope*, ſituate in *Paphlagonia*, the royal Seat of the great King *Mithridates*, to encourage and confirm the Churches which he had lately planted in thoſe Parts; and here he ordained *Philologus*, formerly one of St. *Paul*'s Diſciples, Biſhop of that City.

Hence he came to *Byzantium* (ſince called *Conſtantinople*) where he inſtructed them in the Knowledge of the *Chriſtian* Religion, founded a Church for divine Worſhip, and ordained *Stachys* (whom St. *Paul* calls *his beloved Stachys*) firſt Biſhop of that Place. *Baronius* indeed is unwilling to believe this, deſirous to engroſs the Honour of it to St. *Peter*, whom he will have to have been the firſt Planter of *Chriſtianity* in theſe Parts. But beſides that *Baronius*'s Authority is very ſlight and inſignificant in this Caſe (as we have before noted in St. *Peter*'s Life) this Matter is expreſly aſſerted not only by *Nicephorus Caliſtus*, but by another *Nicephorus* Patriarch of *Conſtantinople*, and who therefore may be preſumed knowing in his Predeceſſors in that See. Baniſhed out of the City by him, who at that Time uſurped the Government, he fled to *Argyropolis*, a Place near at hand, where he preached the Goſpel for two Years together with good Succeſs, converting great Numbers to the Faith. After this he travelled over *Thrace*, *Macedonia*, *Theſſaly*, *Achaia*: *Nazianzen* adds *Epyrus*, in all which Places

Places for many Years he preached and propagated *Chriſtianity*, and confirmed the Doctrine that he taught with great Signs and Miracles: At laſt he came to *Petræ* a City of *Achaia*, where he gave his laſt and great Teſtimony to it; I mean, laid down his own Life to ratify and enſnare it; in deſcribing whoſe Martyrdom, we ſhall for the Main follow the Account that is given us in the *Acts of his Paſſion*, pretended to have been written by the Preſbyters and Deacons of *Achaia*, preſent to his Martyrdom; which, though I dare not with ſome aſſert to be the genuine Work of thoſe Perſons, yet can it not be denied to be of conſiderable Antiquity, being mentioned by *Philaſtrius*, who flouriſhed *Anno* 382, and were, no doubt, written long before the Time. The Sum of it is this:

ÆGEAS Proconſul *Achaia*, came at this Time to *Patræ*, where obſerving that Multitudes were fallen off from *Paganiſm*, and had embraced *Chriſtianity*, he endeavoured by all Arts both of Favour and Cruelty to reduce the People to their old Idolatries: To him the Apoſtle reſolutely makes his Addreſs, calmly puts him in mind, that he being but a Judge of Men, ſhould own and revere him who was the ſupreme and impartial Judge of all; that he ſhould give him that divine Honour which was due to him, and leave off the Impieties of his falſe *Heathen* Worſhip. The Proconſul derided him as an Innovator in Religion, a Propagator of Superſtition, whoſe Author the *Jews* had infamouſly put to death upon a Croſs. Hereat the Apoſtle took an Occaſion to diſcourſe to him of the Infinite Love and Goodneſs of our Lord, who came into the World to purchaſe the Salvation of Mankind, and for that End did not diſdain to die upon the Croſs. To whom the Proconſul anſwered, that he might perſuade them ſo, that would believe him; for his Part if he did not comply with him in doing Sacrifice to the Gods, he would cauſe him to ſuffer upon that Croſs, which he had ſo

much extolled and magnified. St. *Andrew* replied, That he did ſacrifice to God, the only true and omnipotent Being, not with Fumes and bloody Offerings, but in the Sacrifice of the immaculate Lamb of God. The Iſſue was, the Apoſtle was committed to Priſon, whereat the People were ſo enraged, that they had broken out into a Mutiny, had not the Apoſtle reſtrained them, perſuading them to imitate the Mildneſs and Patience of our meek humble Saviour, and not to hinder him from that Crown of Martyrdom that now waited for him.

THE next Day he was again brought before the Proconſul, who endeavoured to perſuade him that he would not fooliſhly deſtroy himſelf, but live and enjoy with him the Pleaſures of this Life. The Apoſtle told him, that he ſhould have with him eternal Joys, if renouncing his execrable Idolatries, he would heartily entertain *Chriſtianity*, which he had hitherto ſo ſucceſsfully preached amongſt them. That anſwered the Proconſul, is the very Reaſon why I am ſo earneſt with you to ſacrifice to the Gods, that thoſe whom you have every-where ſeduced, may, by your Example, be brought to return back to that ancient Religion which they have forſaken; otherwiſe I'll cauſe you with exquiſite Tortures to be crucified. The Apoſtle replied, That now he ſaw it was in vain any longer to deal with him, a Perſon incapable of ſober Counſels, and hardned in his own Blindneſs and Folly; that as for himſelf, he might do his worſt, and if he had one Torment greater than another, he might heap that upon him: the greater Conſtancy he ſhewed in his Sufferings for *Chriſt*, the more acceptable he ſhould be to his Lord and Maſter. *Ægeas* could now hold no longer, but paſſed the Sentence of Death upon him; and *Nicephorus* gives us ſome more particular Account of the Proconſul's Diſpleaſure and Rage againſt him, which was, that amongſt others he had converted his Wife *Maximilla*, and his Brother

Stranocles

Stranocles to the *Christian* Faith, having cured them of desperate Distempers that had seized upon them.

The Proconsul first commanded him to be scourged, seven Lictors successively whipping his naked Body; and seeing his invincible Patience and Constancy commanded him to be crucified, but not to be fastened to the Cross with Nails, but Cords, that so his Death might be more lingering and tedious. As he was led to Execution, to which he went with a chearful and composed Mind, the People cried out, that he was an innocent and good Man, and unjustly condemned to die. Being come within Sight of the Cross, he saluted it with this kind Address, That he had long desired and expected this happy Hour, that the Cross had been consecrated by the Body of *Christ* hanging on it, and adorned with the Members with so many inestimable Jewels, that he came joyful and triumphing to it, that it might receive him as a Disciple and Follower of him, who once hung upon it, and by the Means to carry him safe unto his Master, having been the Instrument upon which his Master had redeemed him. Having prayed, and exhorted the People to Constancy and Perseverance in that Religion which he had delivered to them, he was fastned to the Cross, whereon he hung two Days, teaching and instructing the People all the Time; and when great Importunities in the mean while were used to the Proconsul to spare his Life, he earnestly begged of our Lord, that he might at this Time seal the Truth of his Religion with his Blood. God heard his Prayer, and he immediately expired on the last of *November*, though in what Year no certain Account can be recovered.

We shall conclude the History of this Apostle with that encomiastick Character, which one of the Ancients gives of him. "St. *Andrew* was the First-"born of the Apostolick Quire; the main and "prime Pillar of the Church; a Rock before the "Rock;

" Rock; the Foundation of that Foundation; the " First-fruits of the Beginning; a Caller of others " before he was called himſelf; he preached that " Goſpel that was not yet believed or entertained; " revealed and made known that Life to his Brother, " which he had not yet perfectly learned himſelf. " So great Treaſures did that one Queſtion bring " him, *Maſter, where dwelleſt thou?* which he ſoon " perceived by the Anſwer given him, and which he " deeply pondered in Mind, *Come and ſee.* How " art thou become a Prophet? whence thus divine- " ly ſkilful? what is it that thou thus ſoundeſt in " *Peter*'s Ears? (*We have found him*, &c.) why doſt " thou attempt to compaſs him, whom thou canſt " not comprehend? how can he be found, who is " omnipreſent? But he knew well what he ſaid: " We have found him, whom *Adam* loſt, whom " *Eve* injured, whom the Clouds of Sin have hidden " from us, and whom our Tranſgreſſiions had hither- " to made a Stranger to us," *&c.* So that of all our Lord's Apoſtles Saint *Andrew* had thus far the Honour to be the firſt Preacher of the Goſpel.

CHAP. VIII.

The LIFE *of St.* JAMES.

SAINT *James*, ſirnamed the *Great*, either becauſe of his Age, being much elder than the other, or for ſome peculiar Honours and Favours which our Lord conferred upon him, was by Country a *Galilean*, born, probably, either at *Capernaum*, or *Bethſaida*, being one of *Simon Peter*'s Partners in the Trade of Fiſhing. He was the Son of *Zebdai*, or *Zebedee*, a Fiſherman, and the many Servants which he kept for that Employment, ſpeak him a Man of ſome conſiderable Note in that Trade and Way of Life, as *Nicephorus* notes. His Mother's Name was *Mary*, ſirnamed *Salome*, called firſt *Taviphilia*, ſays an ancient *Arabick* Writer, the Daughter, as is moſt probable, not Wife of *Cleopas*, Siſter to *Mary* the Mother of our Lord: not her own Siſter properly ſo called (the bleſſed Virgin being in all Likelihood an only Daughter) but Couſin-german, ſtiled her Siſter, according to the Mode and Cuſtom of the *Jews*, who were wont to call all ſuch near Relations by the Names of *Brothers* and *Siſters*; and in this Reſpect he had the Honour of a near Relation to our Lord himſelf. His Education was in the Trade of Fiſhing; no Employment is baſe that's honeſt and induſtrious, nor can it be thought mean and diſhonourable to him, when it is remembred, that our Lord himſelf, the Son of God, ſtooped ſo low, as not only to become the reputed

Son,

Son of a Carpenter, but during the Retirement of his private Life, to work himſelf at his Father's Trade, nor devoting himſelf meerly to Contemplations, nor withdrawing from all uſeful Society with the World, and hiding himſelf in the Solitudes of an *Anchoret*, but buſying himſelf in an active Courſe of Life, working at the Trade of a Carpenter, and particularly making Ploughs and Yokes.

ST. *JAMES* applied himſelf to his Father's Trade, not diſcouraged with the Meanneſs, nor ſinking under the Difficulties of it; and, as uſually the Bleſſings of Heaven meet Men in the Way of an honeſt and induſtrious Diligence, it was in the Exerciſe of this Calling, when our Saviour paſſing by the Sea of *Galilee*, ſaw him and his Brother in the Ship, and called them to be his Diſciples.

IT was not long after this, that he was called from the Station of an ordinary Diſciple, to the Apoſtolical Office; and not only ſo, but honoured with ſome peculiar Acts of Favour beyond moſt of the Apoſtles, being one of the Three, whom our Lord uſually made Choice of to admit to the more intimate Tranſactions of his Life, from which the others were excluded. Thus, with *Peter* and his Brother *John*, he was taken to the miraculous Raiſing of *Jairus*'s Daughter; admitted to *Chriſt*'s glorious Transfiguration upon the Mount, and the Diſcourſes that there paſſed between him and the two great Miniſters of Heaven; as alſo with him into the Garden, to be a Spectator of thoſe bitter Agonies, which the holy *Jeſus* was to undergo as the preparatory Sufferings to his Paſſion.

WHAT became of St. *James*, after our Saviour's Aſcenſion, we have no certain Account either from ſacred or eccleſiaſtical Story. *Sophronius* tells us, that he preached to the diſperſed *Jews*, which ſurely he means of that Diſperſion that was made of the *Jewiſh* Converts, after the Death of *Stephen*. The *Spaniſh* Writers generally contend, that having preached

preached the *Goſpel* up and down *Judea* and *Samaria*, after the Death of St. *Stephen*, he came to theſe *weſtern* Parts, and particularly into *Spain* (ſome add *Britain* and *Ireland*) where he planted *Chriſtianity*, and appointed ſome ſelect Diſciples to perfect what he had begun, and then returned back to *Jeruſalem*. Of this there are no Footſtepts in any antient Writers, earlier than the middle Ages of the Church, when 'tis mentioned by *Iſidore*, the *Breviary* of *Toledo*, and an *Arabic* Book of *Anaſtaſius*, Patriarch of *Antioch*, concerning the Paſſions of the *Martyrs*, and ſome others after them. Nay, *Baronius* himſelf, though endeavouring to render the Account as ſmooth and plauſible as he could, and to remove what Objections lay againſt it, yet, after all confeſſes, he did it only to ſhew, that the Thing was not impoſſible, nor to be accounted ſuch a monſtrous and extravagant Fable, as ſome Men made it to be; and indeed elſewhere he plainly and peremptorily both denies and diſapproves it. He could not but ſee, that the Shortneſs of the Apoſtle's Life, the Apoſtles continuing all in one entire Body at *Jeruſalem*, even after the Diſperſing of the other *Chriſtians*, probably not going out of the Bounds of *Judea*, for many Years after our Lord's Aſcenſion, could not comport with ſo tedious and difficult a Voyage, and the Time which he muſt neceſſarily ſpend in thoſe Parts; and therefore 'tis ſafeſt to confine his Miniſtry to *Judea*, and the Parts thereabouts, and to ſeek for him at *Jeruſalem*, where we are ſure to find him.

HEROD AGRIPPA, Son of *Ariſtobulus*, and Grandchild of *Herod the Great* (under whom *Chriſt* was born) had been in great Favour with the late Emperor *Caligula*, but much more with his Succeſſor *Claudius*, who confirmed his Predeceſſor's Grant, with the Addition of *Judea*, *Samaria*, and *Abylene*, the remaining Portions of his Grandfather's Dominions. *Claudius* being ſettled in the Empire, *Herod* comes over from *Rome*, to take Poſſeſſion and

to manage the Affairs of his new acquired Kingdom. A Prince noble and generous, prudent and politick, thoroughly verſed in all the Arts of Courtſhip, able to oblige Enemies, and to mollify or decline the Diſpleaſure of the Emperor, (witneſs his ſubtle and cunning Inſinuations to *Caligula*, when he commanded the *Jews* to account him a God) he was one that knew, let the Wind blow which Way it would, how to gain the Point he aimed at; of a courteous and affable Demeanor, but withal a mighty Zealot for the *Jewiſh* Religion, and a moſt accurate Obſerver of the *Moſaic* Law, keeping himſelf free from all legal Impurities, and ſuffering no Day to paſs over his Head, in which he himſelf was not preſent at the Sacrifice. Being deſirous, in the Entrance upon his Sovereignty, to inſinuate himſelf into the Favour of the Populace, and led no leſs by his own zealous Inclination, he ſaw no better Way, than to fall heavy upon the *Chriſtians*, a Sort of Men, whom he knew the *Jews* infinitely hated, as a novel and an upſtart Sect, whoſe Religion proclaimed open Defiance to the *Moſaic* Inſtitutions. Hereupon he began to raiſe a Perſecution, but alas, the Commonalty were too mean a Sacrifice to fall as the only Victims to his Zeal and popular Deſigns, he muſt have a fatter and more honourable Sacrifice. It was not long before St. *James*'s ſtirring and active Temper, his bold Reproving of the *Jews*, and vigorous contending for the Truth and Excellency of the *Chriſtian* Religion, rendered him a fit Object for his Turn: Him he commands to be apprehended, caſt into Priſon, and Sentence of Death to be paſſed upon him. As he was led forth to the Place of Martyrdom, the Soldier or Officer that had guarded him to the Tribunal, or rather his Accuſer (and ſo *Suidas* expreſly tells us it was) having been convinced, by that mighty Courage and Conſtancy which St. *James* ſhewed at the Time of his Trial, repented of what he had done, came and fell down at the Apoſtle's Feet, and heartily

tily begged Pardon for what he had ſaid againſt him. The holy Man, after a little Surprize at the Thing, raiſed him up, embraced, and kiſſed him. *Peace* (ſaid he) *my Son, Peace be to thee, and the Pardon of thy Faults.* Whereupon, before them all, he publickly profeſſed himſelf to be a *Chriſtian*, and ſo both were beheaded at the ſame Time. Thus fell St. *James* the apoſtolick Proto-Martyr, the firſt of that Number that gained the Crown, chearfully taking that Cup which he had long ſince told his Lord he was moſt ready to drink of.

But the divine Vengeance, that never ſleeps, ſuffered not the Death of this innocent and righteous Man to paſs long unrevenged; of which, though St. *Luke* gives us but a ſhort Account, yet *Joſephus*, who might himſelf remember it, being a Youth, at that Time, of ſeven or eight Years of Age, ſets down the Story with its particular Circumſtances, agreeing almoſt exactly with the ſacred Hiſtorian. Shortly after, St. *James*'s Martyrdom, *Herod* removed to *Cæſarea*, being reſolved to make War upon the neighbouring *Tyrians* and *Sidonians*: While he was here, he proclaimed ſolemn Sights, and feſtival Entertainments to be held in Honour of *Cæſar*, to which there flocked a great Confluence of all the Nobility thereabouts. Early in the Morning, on the ſecond Day, he came with great State into the Theatre, to make an Oration to the People, being cloathed in a Robe all over curiouſly wrought with Silver, which encountering with the Beams of the riſing Sun, reflected ſuch a Luſtre upon the Eyes of the People, (who make ſenſible Appearances the only true Meaſures of Greatneſs) as begot an equal Wonder and Veneration in them, crying out (prompted no doubt by Flatterers, who began the Cry) that it was ſome Deity whichthey beheld, and that he who ſpake to them, muſt be ſomething above the ordinary Standard of Humanity. This impious Applauſe *Herod* received, without any Token or Diſlike, or Senſe of that Injury that was

hereby done to the ſupreme Being of the World: But a ſudden Accident changed the Scene, and turned the comic Part into a black fatal Tragedy. Looking up, he eſpied an *Owl*, ſitting upon a Rope over his Head (as probably alſo he did an *Angel*, for ſo St. *Luke* mentions it) which he preſently beheld as the fatal Meſſenger of his Death, as heretofore it had been of his Proſperity and Succeſs. An incurable Melancholy immediately ſeized upon his Mind, as exquiſite Torments did upon his Bowels, cauſed, without Queſtion, by thoſe Worms St. *Luke* ſpeaks of, which immediately fed and preyed upon him. *Behold*, ſaid he, turning to thoſe about him, *The Deity you admired and yourſelves evidently convinced of Flattery and Falſhood, ſee me here by the Laws of Fate condemned to die, whom juſt now you ſtiled immortal.* Being removed into the Palace, his Pains ſtill encreaſed upon him, and though the People mourned and wept, faſted and prayed for his Life and Health, yet his acute Torments got the upper-hand, and after five Days put a Period to his Life. But to return to St. *James*.

BEING put to Death, his Body is ſaid to have taken a ſecond Voyage into *Spain*, where we are, with Confidence enough, told it reſts at this Day. Indeed I met with a very formal Account of its Tranſlation thither, written (ſays the *Publiſher*) above ſix hundred Years ſince, by a Monk of the Abbey of *La Fleury* in *France*; the Sum whereof is this; the Apoſtles at *Jeruſalem* deſigning *Cteſiphon* for *Spain*, ordained him Biſhop, and others being joined to his Aſſiſtance, they took the Body of St. *James*, and went on board a Ship without Oars, without a Pilot, or any to ſteer and conduct their Voyage, truſting only to the Merits of that Apoſtle, whoſe Remains they carried along with them. In ſeven Days they arrived at a Port in *Spain*, where landing, the Corps was ſuddenly taken from them, and with great Appearances of an extraordinary Light from Heaven, conveyed they knew not whither, to the Place of its Interment.

The

The Men, you may imagine were exceedingly troubled, that ſo great a Treaſure ſhould be raviſhed from them; but upon their Prayers and Tears, they were conducted by an Angel to the Place where the Apoſtle was buried, twelve Miles from the Sea. Here they addreſſed themſelves to a rich noble Matron, called *Luparia*, who had a great Eſtate in thoſe Parts, but a ſevere Idolatreſs, begging of her, that they might have Leave to entomb the Bones of the holy Apoſtle, within her Juriſdiction. She entertained them with Contempt and Scorn, with Curſes and Execrations, bidding them go and aſk Leave of the King of the Country: They did ſo, but were by him treated with all the Inſtances of Rage and Fury, and purſued by him, till himſelf periſhed in the Attempt. They returned back to their *Gallœcian* Matron, whom by many Miracles, and eſpecially deſtroying a Dragon that miſerably infeſted thoſe Parts, they at laſt made her a Convert to the Faith, who thereupon commanded her Images to be broken, the Altars to be demoliſhed, and her own Idol-Temple, being cleanſed and purged, to be dedicated to the Honour of St. *James*, by which Means *Chriſtianity* mightily prevailed, and triumphed over Idolatry in all thoſe Countries.



CHAP. IX.

The LIFE *of St.* JOHN.

SAINT *JOHN* was a *Galilean*, the Son of *Zebedee* and *Salome*, younger Brother to St. *James*, together with whom he was brought up to the Trade of Fiſhing. Saint *Jerome* makes him remarkable upon the Account of his Nobility, whereby he became acquainted with the High-Prieſt, and not only reſolutely entered himſelf amongſt the *Jews* at our Saviour's Trial, prevailed to introduce *Peter* into the *Hall*; but was the only Apoſtle that attended our Lord at his Crucifixion, and afterwards durſt own his Mother, and keep her at his own Houſe. But the Nobility of his Family, and eſpecially that it ſhould be ſuch as to procure him ſo much Reſpect from Perſons of the higheſt Rank and Quality, ſeem not reconcileable with the Meanneſs of his Father's Trade, and the Privacy of his Fortune. And for his Acquaintance with the High-prieſt, I ſhould rather place it to ſome other Account, eſpecially if it be true, what *Nicephorus* relates, That he had lately ſold his Eſtate, left by his Father in *Galilee*, to *Annas* the High-prieſt, and had therewith purchaſed a fair Houſe at *Jeruſalem*, about Mount *Sion*, whence he became acquainted with him. Before his coming to *Chriſt*, he ſeems for ſome Time to have been a Diſciple to *John the Baptiſt*, being, probably that other Diſciple that was with *Andrew*, when they left the *Baptiſt* to follow our Saviour

viour, ſo particularly does he relate all Circumſtances of that Tranſaction, though modeſtly, as in other Parts of his Goſpel, concealing his own Name. He was at the ſame Time with his Brother, called by our Lord both to the Diſcipleſhip and Apoſtolate, by far the youngeſt of all the Apoſtles, as the Antients generally affirm, and his great Age ſeems to evince, living near ſeventy Years after our Saviours Suffering.

THERE is not much ſaid concerning him in the ſacred Story, more than what is recorded of him in Conjunction with his Brother *James*, which we have already remarked in his Life. He was peculiarly dear to his Lord and Maſter, being the *Diſciple whom* Jeſus *loved*, that is, treated with more Freedom and Familiarity than the reſt.

AND, indeed, he was not only one of the Three, whom our Saviour made Partakers of the private Paſſages of his Life, but had ſome Inſtances of a more particular Kindneſs and Favour conferred upon him. Witneſs his lying in our Saviour's Boſom at the Paſchal Supper; it being the Cuſtom of thoſe Times to lie along at Meals upon Couches, ſo that the ſecond lay with his Head in the Boſom of him that was before him; this honourable Place was not given to any of the Aged, but reſerved for our Apoſtle: Nay, when *Peter* was deſirous to know, which of them our Saviour meant, when he told them that one of them ſhould betray him, and durſt not himſelf propound the Queſtion, he made uſe of St. *John* (whoſe Familiarity with him might warrant ſuch an Enquiry) to aſk our Lord; who thereupon made them to underſtand it was *Judas* whom he deſigned by the Traitor. This Favour our Apoſtle endeavoured, in ſome Meaſure, to anſwer by Returns of particular Kindneſs and Conſtancy to our Saviour, ſtaying with him, when the reſt deſerted him. Indeed, upon our Lord's firſt Apprehenſion he fled after the other Apoſtles, it not being without ſome

Probability

Probability and Reaſon, that the Ancients conceive him to have been that young Man that followed after *Chriſt*, having a linnen Cloth caſt about his naked Body, whom when the Officers laid hold upon, he left the linnen Cloth, and fled naked from them. This, in all likelihood, was that Garment that he had caſt about him at Supper (for they had peculiar Veſtments for that Purpoſe) and being extremely affected with the Treaſon, and our Lord's approaching Paſſion, had forgot to put on his other Garments, but followed him into the Garden in the ſame Habit wherewith he aroſe from the Table, it being then Night, and ſo leſs liable to be taken Notice of, either by himſelf or others. But though he fled at preſent to avoid that ſudden Violence that was offered to him, yet he ſoon recovered himſelf, and returning back to ſee his Maſter, confidently entered into the High-prieſt's Hall, and followed our Lord through the ſeveral Paſſages of his Trial, and at laſt waited upon him (and, for any Thing we know, was the only Apoſtle that did ſo) at his Execution, owning him, as well as being owned by him, in the Midſt of Arms and Guards, and in the thickeſt Crowds of his moſt inveterate Enemies. Here it was that our Lord, by his laſt Will and Teſtament, made upon the Croſs, appointed him Guardian of his own Mother, the bleſſed Virgin: *When he ſaw his Mother, and the Diſciple ſtanding by, whom he loved, he ſaid unto his Mother, Woman, behold thy Son*; ſee, here is one that ſhall ſupply my Place, and be to thee inſtead of a Son, to love and honour thee, to provide and take care for thee: *And to the Diſciple he ſaid, Behold thy Mother*; her, whom thou ſhalt henceforth deal with, treat and obſerve, with that Duty and honourable Regard, which the Relation of an indulgent Mother challenges from a pious and obedient Son: Whereupon *he took her into his own Houſe*, her Huſband *Joſeph* being ſome Time ſince dead, and made her a principal Part of his Charge and Care. And certainly the Holy

Holy *Jesus* could not have given a more honourable Testimony of his particular Respect and Kindness to St. *John*, than to commit his own Mother, whom of all earthly Relations he held most dear and valuable, to his Trust and Care, and to substitute him to supply that Duty which he himself paid her while he was here below.

At the first News of our Lord's Return from the Dead, he, accompanied with *Peter*, presently hasted to the Sepulchre. It was to *Peter* that St. *John* gave the Notice of *Christ*'s appearing, when he came to them at the Sea of *Tiberias*, in the Habit of a Stranger; and it was for *John* that *Peter* was so sollicitous to know what was to become of him. After *Christ*'s Ascension, we find these two going up to the Temple, at the Hour of Prayer, and miraculously healing the poor impotent Cripple; both preached to the People, and both apprehended together by the Priests and *Sadducees*, and thrown into Prison, and the next Day brought forth to plead their Cause before the *Sanhedrim*. These were the two chosen by the Apostles to send down to *Samaria*, to settle and confirm the Plantation which *Philip* had made in those Parts, where they confounded and baffled *Simon* the Magician, and set him in an hopeful Way to Repentance.

In the Division of Provinces, which the Apostles made among themselves, *Asia* fell to his Share, though he did not presently enter upon his Charge, otherwise we must needs have heard of him in the Account which St. *Luke* gives of St. *Paul*'s several Journies into, and Residence in those Parts. Probable therefore it is, that he dwelt still in his own House at *Jerusalem*, at least till the Death of the Blessed *Virgin*, whose Death happened *Anno Christi* XLVIII, about fifteen Years after our Lord's Ascension. Some Years after her Death, he took his Journey into *Asia*, and industriously applied himself to the propagating *Christianity*, preaching where the Gospel had not yet taken Place, and confirming it where it was already plant-

ed. Many Churches of Note and Eminency were of his Foundation, *Smyrna*, *Pergamus*, *Thyatira*, *Sardis*, *Philadelphia*, *Laodicea* and others; but his chief Place of Reſidence was at *Epheſus*, where St. *Paul* had, many Years before, ſettled a Church, and conſtituted *Timothy* Biſhop thereof.

HAVING ſpent many Years in this Employment, he was at length accuſed to *Domitian*, who had began a Perſecution againſt the *Chriſtians*, as an eminent Aſſertor of *Atheiſm* and Impiety, and a publick Subverter of the Religion of the Empire. By his Command the *Proconſul* of *Aſia* ſent him to *Rome*, where his Treatment was, what might be expected from ſo bloody and barbarous a Prince, he was caſt into a Caldron of boiling Oil, or rather Oil ſet on Fire: But that divine Providence, that ſecured the three *Hebrew* Captives in the Flames of a burning Furnace, brought this holy Man ſafe out of this, one would have thought, unavoidable Deſtruction. An Inſtance of ſo ſignal a Preſervation, as had been enough to perſuade a conſidering Man, that there muſt be a Divinity in that Religion that had ſuch mighty and ſolemn Atteſtations. But Miracles themſelves will not convince him, that is fallen under a hard Heart, and an injudicious Mind. The cruel Emperor was not ſatisfied with this, but preſently orders him to be baniſhed and tranſported into an Iſland. The Place of our St. *John*'s Baniſhment, was not *Epheſus*, as *Chryſoſtom*, by a great Miſtake makes it, but *Patmos*, a deſolate Iſland in the *Archipelago*, where he remained ſeveral Years, inſtructing the Inhabitants in the Faith of *Chriſt*. Here it was, about the End of *Domitian*'s Reign, (as *Irenæus* tells us) that he wrote his *Apocalypſe*, or Book of *Revelations*, wherein, by frequent Viſions and prophetical Repreſentations, he had a clear Scheme and Proſpect of the State and Condition of *Chriſtianity*, in the future Periods and Ages of the Church.

DOMITIAN,

DOMITIAN, whoſe prodigious Wickedneſs had rendered him infamous and burthenſome to the World, being taken out of the Way, *Cocceius Nerva* ſucceeded in the Empire, a prudent Man, and of a milder and more ſober Temper. He reſcinded the odious Acts of his Predeceſſor; and by publick Edict recalled thoſe from Baniſhment, whom the Fury of *Domitian* had ſent thither. St. *John* taking the Advantage of this general Indulgence, left *Patmos*, and returned into *Aſia*, his antient Charge, but chiefly fixed his Seat at *Epheſus*, the Care and Preſidency whereof he took upon him, and by the Aſſiſtance of ſeven Biſhops, governed that large and ſpacious Dioceſe. Here at the Requeſt of the Biſhops of *Aſia*, he wrote his *Goſpel* with very ſolemn Preparation.

ST. *JOHN* ſeems always to have led a ſingle Life, and ſo the Ancients tell us, nay, St. *Ambroſe* poſitively affirms, that all the Apoſtles were married, except St. *John* and St. *Paul*. There want not indeed ſome, and eſpecially the middle Writers of the Church, who will have our Apoſtle to have been married, and that it was at his Marriage the Water was turned into Wine, and that he immediately quitted his conjugal Relation, and became one of our Lord's Diſciples. But this, as *Baronius* himſelf confeſſes, is trifling, and the Iſſue of fabulous Invention, a Thing wholly unknown to the Fathers and beſt Writers of the Church, and which, not only has no juſt Authority to ſupport it, but Arguments enough to beat it down. As for his natural Temper, he ſeems to have been of a moſt eager and reſolute Diſpoſition, eaſily apt to be inflamed and provoked, which his reduced Age brought to a more ſtaid and a calmer Temper. He was poliſhed by no Study or Arts of Learning, but what was wanting in that, was abundantly made up in the excellent Temper and Conſtitution of his Mind, and that Furniture of divine Graces which he was adorned withal. His Humility was admirable, ſtudiouſly concealing his own Worth and Ho-

nour, in all his Epiſtles (as *Euſebius* long ſince obſerved) he never puts down the honourable Titles of *Apoſtle* or *Evangeliſt*, but only ſtiles himſelf, and that too but ſometimes, *Preſbyter*, or *Elder*, alluding probably, to his Age, as much as Office: In his Goſpel, when he ſpeaks of *the Diſciple whom* Jeſus *loved*, he conſtantly conceals his own Name, leaving the Reader to conjecture who was meant. When Age and Weakneſs grew upon him at *Epheſus*, that he was no longer able to preach to them, he uſed, at every publick Meeting, to be led to the Church, and ſay no more to them, than, *Little Children, love one another*. And when his Auditors wearied with the Repetition of the ſame Thing, aſked him, why he always ſpoke the ſame, he anſwered, Becauſe it was the Command of our Lord, and that if they did nothing elſe, this alone was enough.

Nor was it the leaſt Inſtance of his Care of the Church, and Charity to the Souls of Men, that he was ſo infinitely vigilant againſt Hereticks and Seducers, countermining their Artifices, antidoting againſt the Poiſon of their Errors, and ſhunning all Communion and Converſation with their Perſons. Going along with ſome of his Friends at *Epheſus* to the Bath, he enquired of the Servant that waited there, who was within; the Servant told him, *Cerinthus*, which the Apoſtle no ſooner underſtood, but in great Abhorrency he turned back, *Let us be gone my Brethren*, ſaid he, *and make Haſte from this Place, leſt the Bath wherein there is ſuch an Heretick as* Cerinthus, *the great Enemy of the Truth, fall upon our Heads.* This Account *Irenæus* delivers from *Polycarp*, St. *John*'s own Scholar and Diſciple.

The laſt Inſtance that we ſhall remark of our Apoſtle's Care for the Good of the Church, is the Writings which he left to Poſterity. Whereof the firſt in Time, though placed laſt, is his *Apocalypſe*, or Book of *Revelations*, written while confined in *Patmos*. It was of old, not only rejected by Hereticks, but

but controverted by many of the Fathers themſelves. *Dionyſius*, Biſhop of *Alexandria*, has a very large Diſcourſe concerning it; he tells us, that many plainly diſowned this Book, not only for the Matter, but the Author of it, as being neither Apoſtle, no nor any holy or eccleſiaſtical Perſon; that *Cerinthus* prefixed St. *John*'s Name to it, to give the more plauſible Title to his Dream of *Chriſt*'s Reign upon Earth, and that ſenſual and carnal State that ſhould attend it: That for his Part he durſt not reject it, looking upon it as containing wiſe and admirable Myſteries, though he could not fathom and comprehend them; that he did not meaſure them by his own Line, nor condemn, but rather admire what he could not underſtand; that he owned the Author to have been an holy, and divinely inſpired Perſon, but could not believe it to have been St. *John* the Apoſtle and Evangeliſt, neither Style, Matter, nor Method agreeing with his other Writings; that in this he frequently names himſelf, which he never does in any other; that there were ſeveral *Johns* at that Time, and two buried at *Epheſus*, the Apoſtle, and another, one of the Diſciples that dwelt in *Aſia*, but which the Author of this Book, he leaves uncertain. But though doubted by ſome, it was entertained by the far greater Part of the Ancients as the genuine Work of our St. *John*. Nor could the ſetting down his Name be any reaſonable Exception, for whatever he might do in his other Writings, eſpecially his Goſpel, where it was leſs neceſſary, hiſtorical Matters depending not ſo much upon his Authority, yet it was otherwiſe in prophetick Revelations, where the Perſon of the Revealer adds great Weight and Moment; the Reaſon why ſome of the Prophets under the *Old Teſtament* did ſo frequently ſet down their own Names. The Diverſity of the Style is of no conſiderable Value in this Caſe, it being no Wonder, if in Arguments ſo vaſtly different, the ſame Perſon did not always obſerve the ſame Tenour and Way of writing;

ting; whereof there want not Inſtances in ſome others of the apoſtolick Order. The Truth is, all Circumſtances concur to intitle our Apoſtle to be the Author of it, his Name being frequently expreſſed, its being written in the Iſland of *Patmos* (a Circumſtance not compatible in any but St. *John*) and his ſtyling himſelf *their Brother and Companion in Tribulation, and in the Kingdom and Patience of Jeſus Chriſt*; his writing particular Epiſtles to the ſeven Churches of *Aſia*, all planted, or at leaſt cultivated by him; the Doctrine in it ſuitable to the apoſtolick Spirit and Temper, evidently bearing Witneſs in this Caſe. That which ſeems to have Ground to doubt concerning both its Author and Authority, was, its being long before it was uſually joined with other Books of the holy Canon; for, containing in it ſome Paſſages directly levelled at *Rome*, the Seat of the *Roman* Empire, and others which might be thought to ſymbolize with ſome *Jewiſh* Dreams and Fictions, it might poſſibly ſeem fit to the Prudence of thoſe Times for a while to ſuppreſs it. Nor is the Conjecture of a learned Man to be deſpiſed, who thinks that it might be entruſted in the Keeping of *John* the Preſbyter, Scholar to our Apoſtle; whence probably the Report might ariſe, that he, who was only the *Keeper*, was the *Author* of it. I add no more, than that upon the Account of this *Apocalypſe*, containing a prophetick Scheme of the future State of the *Chriſtian* Church, he is in a ſtrict Senſe a Prophet, and has thereby one conſiderable Addition to his Titles, being not only an Apoſtle and Evangeliſt, but a Prophet; an Honour peculiar to himſelf. *Peter* was an Apoſtle, but properly no Evangeliſt; *Mark* an Evangeliſt, but no Apoſtle; St. *Matthew* an Apoſtle and Evangeliſt, but no Prophet; but St. *John* was both an Apoſtle, an Evangeliſt, and a Prophet.

His Goſpel ſucceeds, written, ſay ſome, in *Patmos*, and publiſhed at *Epheſus*; but according to *Irenæus* and others, more truly, 'twas written by him

him after his Return to *Epheſus*; compoſed at the earneſt Intreaty and Sollicitation of the *Aſian* Biſhops, and Ambaſſadors from the ſeveral Churches, in order whereunto he firſt cauſed them to proclaim a general Faſt, to ſeek the Bleſſing of Heaven on ſo great and ſolemn an Undertaking; which being done, he ſet about it. And if we may believe the Report of *Gregory* Biſhop of *Tours*, he tells us, that upon a Hill near *Epheſus* there was a *Proſeucha*, or uncovered Oratory, whither our Apoſtle uſed often to retire for Prayer and Contemplation, and where he obtained of God, that it might not rain in that Place, till he had finiſhed his Goſpel. Nay, he adds, that even in his Time, no Shower or Storm ever came upon it. Two Cauſes eſpecially contributed to the writing of it; the one, that he might obviate the early Hereſies of thoſe Times, eſpecially of *Ebion*, *Cerinthus*, and the reſt of that Crew, who began openly to deny *Chriſt*'s Divinity, and that he had any Exiſtence before his Incarnation; the Reaſon why our Evangeliſt is ſo expreſs and copious on that Subject. The other was, that he might ſupply thoſe Paſſages of the evangelical Hiſtory, which the reſt of the ſacred Writers had omitted. Collecting therefore the other three Evangeliſts, he firſt ſet his Seal, ratifying the Truth of them with his Approbation and Conſent, and then added his own Goſpel to the reſt, principally inſiſting upon the Acts of *Chriſt* from the firſt commencing of his Miniſtry to the Death of *John the Baptiſt*, wherein the others are moſt defective, giving ſcarce any Account of the firſt Year of our Saviour's Miniſtry, which therefore he made up in very large and particular Narrations. He largely records (as *Nazianzen* obſerves) our Saviour's Diſcourſes, but takes little Notice of his Miracles, probably becauſe ſo fully and particularly related by the reſt. The Subject of his Writing is very ſublime and myſterious, mainly deſigning to prove *Chriſt*'s Divinity, eternal Pre-exiſtence, creating of the World, *&c.* Upon which

which Account *Theodoret* ſtiles his Goſpel, *A* Theology *which human Underſtanding can never fully penetrate and find out.* Thence generally by the Ancients, he is reſembled to an *Eagle*, ſoaring aloft within the Clouds, whither the weak Eye of Man was unable to follow him; hence peculiarly honoured with the Title of, *The Divine*; as if due to none but him, at leaſt to him in a more eminent and extraordinary Manner. Nay, the very *Gentle-Philoſophers* themſelves could not but admire his Writings; witneſs *Amelius* the famous *Platoniſt*, and Regent of *Porphyry*'s School at *Alexandria*; who quoting a Paſſage out of the Beginning of St. *John*'s Goſpel, ſware by *Jupiter*, "That this *Barbarian* (ſo the proud *Greeks* "counted and called all that differed from them) "had hit upon the right Notion, when he affirmed, "that the *Word* that made all Things *was in the Be*"*ginning*, and in Place of prime Dignity and Autho"rity with God; and was that God that created all "Things, in whom every Thing that was made, had, "according to its Nature, its Life and Being; that "he was incarnate, and clothed with a Body, where"in he manifeſted the Glory and Magnificence of his "Nature; that after his Death, he returned to "the Re-poſſeſſion of Divinity, and became the "ſame God, which he was before his aſſuming his "Body, and taking the human Nature and Fleſh "upon him." I have no more to obſerve, but that his *Goſpel* was afterwards tranſlated into *Hebrew*, and kept by the *Jews* among their ſecret Archives and Records in their Treaſury at *Tiberias*; where a Copy of it was found by one *Joſeph* a *Jew*, afterwards converted, and whom *Conſtantine the Great* advanced to the Honour of a Count of the Empire, who breaking open the Treaſury, though he miſſed of Money, found Books beyond all Treaſure, St. *Matthew*, and St. *John's Goſpel*, and the *Acts of the Apoſtles* in *Hebrew*, the reading whereof greatly contributed towards his Converſion.

BESIDES these, our Apostle wrote three Epistles; the first whereof is catholick, calculated for all Times and Places, containing most excellent Rules for the Conduct of the *Christian* Life, pressing to Holiness and Purity of Manners, and not to rest in a naked and empty Profession of Religion, not to be led away with the crafty Insinuations of Seducers, antidoting Men against the Poison of the *Gnostick* Principles and Practices, to whom it is not to be doubted, but that the Apostle had a more particular Respect in this Epistle. According to his wonted Modesty he conceals his Name, it being of more Importance with wise Men, what it is that is said, than who it is that says it. And this Epistle, *Eusebius* tells us, was universally received, and never questioned by any; anciently, as appears by St. *Augustine*, inscribed to the *Parthians*, though for what Reason I am yet to learn, unless (as we hinted before) it was, because he himself had heretofore preached in those Parts of the World. The other two Epistles are but short, and directed to particular Persons, the one a Lady of honourable Quality, the other to the charitable and hospitable *Gaius*, so kind a Friend, and so courteous an Entertainer of all indigent *Christians*. These Epistles indeed were not of old admitted into the Canon, nor are owned by the Church in *Syria* at this Day, inscribed by many to the younger *John*, Disciple to our Apostle. But there is no just Cause to question who was their Father, seeing both the Doctrine, Phrase, and Design of them do sufficiently challenge our Apostle for their Author.

CHAP. X.

The LIFE *of St.* PHILIP.

ST. *PHILIP*, was born at *Bethſaida*, a Town near the Sea of *Tiberias*, the City of *Andrew* and *Peter*. He had the Honour of being firſt called to the Diſcipleſhip, which thus came to paſs. Our Lord, ſoon after his Return from the Wilderneſs, having met with *Andrew* and his Brother *Peter*, after ſome ſhort Diſcourſe parted from them: And the very next Day, as he was paſſing through *Galilee*, he found *Philip*, whom he preſently commanded to *follow him*, the conſtant Form which he uſed in making Choice of his Diſciples, and thoſe that did inſeparably attend upon him: So that the Prerogative of being firſt called, evidently belongs to *Philip*, he being the Firſt-Fruits of our Lord's Diſciples. For though *Andrew* and *Peter* were the firſt that came to, and converſed with *Chriſt*, yet did they immediately return to their Trade again, and were not called to the Diſcipleſhip till above a whole Year after, when *John* was caſt into Priſon.

In the Diſtribution of the ſeveral Regions of the World made by the Apoſtles, though no Mention be made by *Origen* or *Euſebius*, what Part fell to our Apoſtle, yet we are told by others, that the *Upper Aſia* was his Province where he applied himſelf with an indefatigable Diligence and Induſtry to recover

ver Men out of the Snare of the Devil, to the embracing and Acknowledgment of the Truth.

HAVING for many Years ſucceſsfully managed his apoſtolical Office in all thoſe Parts, he came in the laſt Period of his Life to *Hierapolis* in *Phrygia*, a City rich and populous, but anſwering its Name in its idolatrous Devotions, had Succeſs, the People were aſhamed of their fond Idolatry, and many broke loſe from their Chains of Darkneſs, and ran over to *Chriſtianity*. Whereupon the Magiſtrates of the City ſeize the Apoſtle, and having put him into Priſon, cauſed him to be ſeverely whipped and ſcourged. This preparatory Cruelty paſſed, he was led to Execution, and being bound, was hanged up by the Neck againſt a Pillar, though others tell us, that he was crucified. We are farther told, that at his Execution the Earth began ſuddenly to quake, and the Ground whereon the People ſtood, to ſink under them, which when they apprehended, and bewailed as an evident Act of divine Vengeance purſuing them for their Sins, it as ſuddeniy ſtopt, and went no farther. The Apoſtle being dead, his Body was taken down by St. *Bartholomew*, his Fellow-ſufferer, though not finally executed, and *Mariamne*, St. *Philip*'s Siſter, who is ſaid to have been the conſtant Companion of his Travels, and decently buried; after which, having confirmed the People in the Faith of *Chriſt*, they departed from them.

CHAP. XI.

The LIFE *of St.* BARTHOLOMEW.

CONCERNING our Apoſtle's Travels up and down the World to propagate the *Chriſtian* Faith, we ſhall preſent the Reader with a brief Account, though we cannot warrant the exact Order of them. That he went as far as *India*, is owned by all, which ſurely is meant of the *Hither India*, or that Part of it lying next to *Aſia*; *Socrates* tells us, it was the *India* bordering upon *Æthiopia*, meaning, no doubt, the *Aſian Æthiopia* (whereof we ſhall ſpeak in the Life of St. *Thomas*) *Sophronius* calls it the *Fortunate India*, and tells us, that here he left behind him St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel, whereof *Euſebius* gives a more particular Relation: That when *Pantænus*, a Man famous for his Skill in Philoſophy, and eſpecially the Inſtitutions of the *Stoicks*, but much more for his hearty Affection to *Chriſtianity*, in a devout and zealous Imitation of the Apoſtles, was inflamed with a Deſire to propagate the *Chriſtian* Religion unto the *Eaſtern* Countries, he came as far as *India* itſelf. Here, amongſt ſome that yet retained the Knowledge of *Chriſt*, he found St. *Matthew*'s Goſpel written in *Hebrew*, left here (as the Tradition was) by St. *Bartholomew*, one of the twelve Apoſtles, when he preached the Goſpel to theſe Nations.

AFTER

AFTER his Labours in these Parts of the World, he returned to the more *western* and *northern* Parts of *Asia*. At *Hierapolis* in *Phrygia* we find him in Company with St. *Philip*, instructing that Place in the Principles of *Christianity*, and convincing them of the Folly of their blind Idolatries. Here, by the enraged Magistrates he was at the same Time with *Philip* designed for Martyrdom; in order whereunto he was fastened upon the Cross, with an Intent to dispatch him; but upon a sudden Conviction that the divine Justice would revenge their Deaths, he was taken down again and dismissed. Hence, probably, he went into *Lycaonia*, the People whereof *Chrysostom* assures us, he instructed and trained up in the *Christian* Discipline. His last Remove was to *Albanople* in *Armenia the Great*, a Place miserably over-grown with Idolatry; from which, while he sought to reclaim the People, he was by the Governor of the Place, commanded to be crucified, which he chearfully underwent, comforting and confirming the converted *Gentiles* to the last Minute of his Life. Some add, that he was crucified with his Head downwards, others, that he was flead, and his Skin first taken off, which might consist well enough with his Crucifixion, Excoriation being a Punishment in Use, not only in *Egypt*, but amongst the *Persians*, the very next Neighbours to these *Armenians*.

CHAP. XII.

The LIFE *of St.* MATTHEW.

SAINT *Matthew*, called alſo *Levi*, was though a *Roman* Officer, an *Hebrew of the Hebrews*, (both his Names ſpeaking him purely of *Jewiſh* Extract and Original) and probably a *Galilean*, and whom I ſhould have concluded born at or near *Capernaum*, but that the *Arabic* Writer of his Life tells us, he was born at *Nazareth*, a City in the Tribe of *Zebulun*, famous for the Habitation of *Joſeph* and *Mary*, but eſpecially the Education and Reſidence of our Bleſſed Saviour, who, though born at *Bethlehem*, was both conceived and bred up here, where he lived the whole Time of his private Life, whence he derived the Title of *Jeſus of Nazareth*. St. *Matthew* was the Son of *Alpheus* and *Mary*, Siſter or Kinſwoman to the Bleſſed *Virgin*; in the ſame *Arabic* Author his Father is called *Ducu*, and his Mother *Karutias*, both originally deſcended of the Tribe of *Iſſachar*, nothing being more common among the *Jews*, than for the ſame Perſon to have ſeveral Names; theſe latter probably expreſſed in *Arabic* according to the *Jewiſh* Signification. His Trade or Way of Life was that of a Publican or Toll-gatherer to the *Romans*, an Office of bad Report among the *Jews*.

OUR Lord having lately cured a famous Paralytick, retired out of *Capernaum*, to walk by the Sea-ſide,

ſide, where he taught the People that flocked after him. Here he eſpied *Matthew* ſitting in his Cuſtom-office, whom he called to come and follow him. The Man was rich, had a wealthy and gainful Trade, a wiſe and prudent Perſon, and underſtood, no doubt, what it would coſt him to comply with this new Employment; that he muſt exchange Wealth for Poverty, a Cuſtom-Houſe for a Priſon, gainful Maſters for a deſpiſed Saviour. But he overlooked all theſe Conſiderations, left all his Intereſts and Relations, to become our Lord's Diſciple, and to embrace (as *Chryſoſtom* obſerves) a more ſpiritual Way of Commerce and Traffick. And to ſhew that he was not diſcontented at his Change, nor apprehended himſelf a Loſer by the Bargain, he entertained our Lord and his Diſciples at a great Dinner in his Houſe, whither he invited his Friends, eſpecially thoſe of his own Profeſſion, piouſly hoping that they alſo would be caught by our Saviour's Converſe and Company.

AFTER his Election to the Apoſtolate, he continued with the reſt, till our Lord's Aſcenſion, and then, for the firſt eight Years at leaſt, preached up and down *Judea*: After which, being to betake himſelf to the Converſion of the *Gentile* World, he was intreated, by the Convert *Jews*, to commit to Writing the Hiſtory of our Saviour's Life and Actions, and to leave it among them as the ſtanding Record of what he had preached to them; which he did accordingly, and ſo compoſed his Goſpel. Little Certainty can be had what Travels he underwent for the Advancement of the *Chriſtian* Faith, ſo irrecoverably is Truth loſt in a Crowd of legendary Stories. *Æthiopia* is generally aſſigned as the Province of his apoſtolical Miniſtry. Authors are divided concerning the Manner in which this Evangeliſt died, ſome affirming, that he died a peaceable Death, while others as ſtrenuouſly contend, that he ſuffered Martyrdom, at *Naddaber*, a City in *Æthiopia*.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIII.

The LIFE *of St.* THOMAS.

THE Bleſſed *Jeſus* being gone to Heaven, and having eminently given Gifts and miraculous Powers to the Apoſtles, St. *Thomas*, moved thereto by ſome divine Intimation, is ſaid to have diſpatched *Thaddæus*, one of the ſeventy Diſciples to *Abgarus*, Toparch of *Edeſſa*, (between whom and our Saviour, the Letters commonly ſaid to have paſſed, are ſtill extant in *Euſebius*) whom he firſt cured of an inveterate Diſtemper, and afterwards converted him, with his Subjects, to the Faith. The apoſtolical Province aſſigned to St. *Thomas* (as *Origen* tells us) was *Parthia*, after which *Sophronius* and others inform us, that he preached the Goſpel to the *Medes*, *Perſians*, *Caramanians*, *Hyrcani*, *Bactrians*, and the neighbouring Nations. In *Perſia*, one of the Antients (upon what Ground I know not) acquaints us that he met with the *Magi* or *Wiſemen*, who came that long Journey from the *Eaſt*, to bring Preſents to our new-born Saviour, whom he baptized, and took along with him, as his Companions and Aſſiſtants in the Propagation of the Goſpel. Hence he preached in and paſſed through *Æthiopia*, that is, (that we may clear this by the Way) the *Aſian Æthiopia*, conterminous to, if not the ſame with *Chaldæa*, whence *Tacitus* does not only make the *Jews* Deſcendants from the *Æthiopians*, as whoſe Anceſtors came from *Ur* of the *Chaldeans*

Chaldeans; but *Hesychius* makes the Inhabitants of *Zagrus*, a Mountain beyond *Tygris*, *a People of the Æthiopians*; this is mentioned by *Benjamin* the *Jew*, in his *Itinerary*, *the Land of Cush*, or *Æthiopia*, the Inhabitants whereof are stiled by *Herodotus*, the *Oriental Æthiopians*, by way of Distinction from those who lived *South* of *Egypt*, and were under the same military Prefecture with the *Arabians*, under the Command of *Arsames*, as the other were joined with the *Indians*, and in the same Place are called *The Asian Æthiopians*. Having travelled through these Countries, he last came to *India*. We are told by *Nicephorus*, that he was at first unwilling to venture himself into those Countries, fearing he should find their Manners as rude and intractable as their Faces were black and deformed, till encouraged by a Vision, that assured him of the divine Presence to assist him. He travelled a great Way into those *Eastern* Nations, as far as the Island *Taprobane*, since called *Sumatra*, and the Country of the *Brachmans*, preaching every where with all the Arts of Gentleness and mild Persuasions, not flying out into sharp Invectives, and furious Heats against their idolatrous Practices, but calmly instructing them in the Principles of *Christianity*, by Degrees persuading them to renounce their Follies, knowing that confirmed Habits must be cured by Patience, long forbearing, and by slow and gentle Methods; aud by these Means he wrought upon the People, and brought them over from the grossest Errors and Superstitions, to the hearty Belief and Entertaiment of Religion.

For want of better Evidence from Antiquity, it may not be amiss to enquire, what Account the *Portuguese*, in their first Discoveries of these Countries, received of these Matters, partly from ancient Monuments and Writings, partly from the constant and uncontrouled Traditions, which the *Christians*, whom they found in those Parts, preserved amongst them. They tells us, that St. *Thomas* came first to

Zocotorà, an Iſland in the *Arabian* Sea; thence to *Cranganor*, where having converted many, he travelled farther into the *Eaſt*, and having ſucceſsfully preached the Goſpel, returned back into the Kingdom of *Coromandel*, where at *Maliapor*, the *Metropolis* of the Kingdom, not far from the Influx of the *Ganges* into the Gulph of *Bengal*, he began to erect a Place for divine Worſhip, till prohibited by the Prieſt, and the *Sagamo*, or Prince of that Country. But upon the Conviction of ſeveral Miracles the Work went on, and the *Sagamo* himſelf embraced the *Chriſtian* Faith, whoſe Example was ſoon followed by great Numbers of his Friends and Subjects. *Gregory of Tours* relates many Miracles done upon the annual Solemnity of his Martyrdom; and one ſtanding Miracle, an Account whereof, he tells us, he received from one *Theodorus*, who had himſelf been in the Place, *viz.* that in the Temple, where the Apoſtle was buried, there hung a Lamp before his Tomb, which burnt perpetually, without Oil or any Fewel to feed and nouriſh it, the Light whereof was never diminiſhed, nor by Wind or any other Accident could be extinguiſhed.

FROM theſe firſt Plantations of *Chriſtianity* in the *Eaſt-Indies*, by our Apoſtle, there is ſaid to have been a continued Series and Succeſſion of *Chriſtians*, (hence called St. *Thomas-Chriſtians*) in thoſe Parts, unto this Day. The *Portugueſe*, at their firſt Arrival there, found them in great Numbers in ſeveral Places, no leſs, as ſome tell us, than fifteen thouſand Families. They are very poor, and their Churches generally mean and ſordid, wherein they had no Images of Saints, nor any Repreſentations than that of the Croſs; they are governed in Spirituals by an High-Prieſt (whom ſome make an *Armenian* Patriarch of the Sect of *Neſtorius*, but in Truth is no other than the Patriarch of *Moſul*, the Remainder, as is probable, of the antient *Seleucia*, and by ſome, though erroneouſly, ſtiled *Babylon*) reſiding Northward

ward in the Mountains, who, together with twelve Cardinals, two Patriarchs, and ſeveral Biſhops, diſpoſes of all Affairs relating to Religion; and to him all the *Chriſtians* of the *Eaſt* yield Subjection. They promiſcuouſly admit to the Holy Communion, which they receive under both Kinds, of Bread and Wine; though inſtead of Wine, which their Country affords not, making Uſe of the Juice of Raiſins, ſteeped one Night in Water, and then preſſed forth. Children, unleſs in Caſe of Sickneſs, ; are not baptiſed till the fortieth Day. At the Death of Friends, their Kindred and Relations keep an eight Days Feaſt, in Memory of the Departed. Every Lord's Day they have their publick Aſſemblies for Prayer and Preaching, their Devotions being managed with great Reverence and Solemnity. Their *Bible*, at leaſt the *New-Teſtament*, is in the *Syriac* Language, to the Study whereof the Preachers earneſtly exhort the People. They obſerve the Times of *Advent* and *Lent*, the Feſtivals of our Lord, many of the Saints, thoſe eſpecially that relate to St. *Thomas*, the *Dominica in Albis*, or Sunday after *Eaſter*, in Memory of the famous Confeſſion which St. *Thomas* on that Day made of *Chriſt*, after he had been ſenſibly cured of his Unbelief; another on the firſt of *July*, celebrated, not only by *Chriſtians*, but by *Moors* and *Pagans*; the People who come to his Sepulchre on Pilgrimage, carrying away a little of the red Earth of the Place where he was interred, which they keep as an ineſtimable Treaſure, and conceit it ſovereign againſt Diſeaſes. They have a Kind of Monaſteries of the Religious, who live in great Abſtinence and Chaſtity. Their Prieſts are ſhaven in faſhion of a Croſs, have leave to marry once, but denied a ſecond Time: No Marriages to be diſſolved but by Death. Theſe Rites and Cuſtoms they ſolemnly pretend to have derived from the very Time of St. *Thomas*, and with the greateſt Care and Diligence do obſerve them at this Day.

CHAP. XIV.

The LIFE *of St.* JAMES *the Leſs.*

HE was the Son of *Joſeph*, afterwards Huſband to the Bleſſed *Virgin*, and his firſt Wife, whom St. *Jerom* from Tradition ſtiles *Eſcha*, *Hippolytus*, Biſhop of *Porto Salome*; and farther adds, that ſhe was the Daughter of *Aggi*, Brother to *Zacharias*, Father to *John the Baptiſt*: Hence reputed our Lord's Brother, in the ſame Senſe that he was reputed the *Son of Joſeph*. Indeed we find ſeveral ſpoken of in the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, who were *Chriſt*'s Brethren; but in what Senſe, was controverted of old. St. *Jerom*, *Chryſoſtom*, and ſome others will have them ſo called, becauſe the Sons of *Mary*, Couſin-Germans, or, according to the Cuſtom of the *Hebrew* Language, Siſter to the Virgin *Mary*. But *Euſebius*, *Epiphanius*, and the far greater Part of the Ancients make them the Children of *Joſeph*, by a former Wife. And this ſeems moſt genuine and natural, the Evangeliſts ſeeming very expreſs and accurate in the Account which they give of them: *Is not this the Carpenter's Son? Is not his Mother called* Mary, *and his Brethren* James *and* Joſes, *and* Simon *and* Jude? *And his Siſters are they not all with us, whence then hath this Man theſe Things?* By which it is plain, that the *Jews* underſtood theſe Perſons not to be *Chriſt*'s Kinſmen only, but his Brothers,

Brothers, the ſame Carpenter's Sons, having the ſame Relation to him that *Chriſt* himſelf had; though, indeed, they more, *Chriſt* being but his reputed, they his natural Sons. Upon this Account the Bleſſed Virgin is ſometimes called *the Mother of* James *and* Joſes; for ſo amongſt the Women that attended at our Lord's Crucifixion, we find three eminently taken Notice of, *Mary Magdalen*, *Mary the Mother of James and Joſes*, and the *Mother of Zebedee's Children*. Where, by *Mary the Mother of James and Joſes*, no other can be meant than the Virgin *Mary*; it not being reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that the *Evangeliſts* ſhould omit the Bleſſed *Virgin*, who was certainly there; and therefore St. *John* reckoning up the ſame Perſons, expreſly ſtiles her *the Mother of Jeſus*. And though it is true, ſhe was but St. *James*'s Mother-in-Law, yet the *Evangeliſt* might chuſe ſo to ſtile her, becauſe commonly ſo called after *Joſeph*'s Death, and probably (as *Gregory* of *Nyſſa* thinks) known by that Name all along, chuſing that Title, that the Son of God, whom as a Virgin, ſhe had brought forth, might be better concealed, and leſs expoſed to the Malice of the envious *Jews*; nor is it any Wonder that ſhe ſhould be eſteemed and called the *Mother of James*, than that *Joſeph* ſhould be ſtiled and accounted the *Father of Jeſus*.

Of the Place of his Birth, the ſacred Story makes no Mention. What was his particular Way and Courſe of Life, before his being called to the Diſcipleſhip and Apoſtolate, we find no Intimations of it in the Hiſtory of the Goſpel, nor any diſtinct Account concerning him, during our Saviour's Life. After the Reſurrection he was honoured with a particular Appearance of our Lord to him, which though ſilently paſſed over by the *Evangeliſts*, is recorded by St. *Paul*, next to the manifeſting himſelf to the five hundred Brethren at once, *he was ſeen of* James, which is by all underſtood of our Apoſtle. St. *Jerom* out of the *Hebrew* Goſpel of the *Nazarenes* gives us

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a fuller Relation of it, *viz.* that St. *James* had ſolemnly ſworn that from the Time he had drank of the Cup at the Inſtitution of the Supper, he would eat Bread no more, till he ſaw the Lord riſen from the Dead. Our Lord therefore being returned from the Grave, came and appeared to him, commanded Bread to be ſet before him, which he took, bleſſed, and brake, and gave to St. *James*, ſaying, *Eat thy Bread, my Brother, for the Son of Man is truly riſen from among them that ſleep.* After *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion he was choſen Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*, preferred before all the reſt, for his near Relation unto *Chriſt*. This Dignity is by ſome of the Ancients ſaid to have been conferred on him by *Chriſt* himſelf, conſtituting him Biſhop at the Time of his appearing to him. But it is ſafeſt with others to underſtand it of its being done by the Apoſtles, or poſſibly by ſome particular Intimation concerning it, which our Lord might leave behind him.

He adminiſtred his Province with all poſſible Care and Induſtry, omitting no Part of a diligent and faithful Guide of Souls; ſtrengthening the Weak, informing the Ignorant, reducing the Erroneous, reproving the Obſtinate, and, by the Conſtancy of his Preaching, conquering the Stubbornneſs of that perverſe and refractory Generation with whom he had to deal, many of the nobler and the better Sort being brought over to a Compliance with the *Chriſtian* Faith. So careful, ſo ſucceſsful in his Charge, that he awakened the Spite and Malice of his Enemies to conſpire his Ruin: Vexed they were to ſee that St. *Paul*, by appealing to *Cæſar*, had eſcaped their Hands: Malice is as greedy and inſatiable as Hell itſelf, they therefore now turn their Revenge upon St. *James*, which not being able to effect under *Feſtus*'s Government, they more effectually attempted under the Procuratorſhip of *Albinus* his Succeſſor; *Ananus* the *Younger*, then High-prieſt, and of the Sect of the *Sadducees*, reſolving to diſpatch him before the new Governor could arrive. To this End a Council was haſtily

haſtily ſummoned, and the Apoſtle, with ſome others, arraigned and condemned as Violaters of the Law. But that the Thing might be carried in a more plauſible and popular Way, they ſet the Scribes and *Phariſees* at work to enſnare them; who coming to him, began by flattering Inſinuations to ſet upon him. They tell him, that they all had a mighty Confidence in him, and that the whole Nation, as well as they, gave him the Teſtimony of a moſt juſt Man, and one that was no Reſpecter of Perſons; that therefore they deſired he would correct the Error and falſe Opinion which the People had of *Jeſus*; whom they looked upon as the *Meſſiah*, and would take this Opportunity of the univerſal Confluence to the *Paſchal* Solemnity, to ſet them right in their Notions about theſe Things; and would to that End go up with them to the Top of the Temple, where he might be ſeen and heard by all. Being advantageouſly placed upon a Pinnacle or Wing of the Temple, they made this Addreſs to him: *Tell us, O* Juſtus, *whom we have all the Reaſon in the World to believe, that ſeeing the People are thus generally led away with the Doctrine of* Jeſus *that was crucified,* tell us, *What is this Inſtitution of the crucified* Jeſus? To which the Apoſtle anſwered with an audible Voice; *Why do ye enquire of* Jeſus *the Son of Man? he ſits in Heaven on the Right-hand of the Majeſty on high, and will come again in the Clouds of Heaven.* The People below hearing it, glorified the bleſſed *Jeſus*, and openly proclaimed *Hoſanna to the Son of David.* The Scribes and *Phariſees* perceived now that they had over-ſhot themſelves, and that inſtead of reclaiming, they had confirmed the People in their Error; that there was no Way left, but preſently to diſpatch him, that by his ſad Fate others might be warned not to believe him. Whereupon they ſuddenly crying out, that *Juſtus* himſelf was ſeduced and become an Impoſtor, they threw him down from the Place where he ſtood: Though bruiſed, he was not killed by the Fall, but recovered ſo much Strength, as to get upon his

his Knees, and pray to Heaven for them. Vexed that they had not done his Buſineſs, they fell freſh upon the poor Remainders of his Life; and while he was yet at Prayer, and that a *Rechabite* who ſtood by ſtept in and entreated them to ſpare him, a juſt and a righteous Man, and who was then praying for them, they began to load him with a Shower of Stones, till one, more mercifully cruel than the reſt, with a Fuller's Club beat out his Brains. Thus died this good Man in the ninety-ſixth Year of his Age, and about twenty-four Years after *Chriſt*'s Aſcenſion, being taken away to the great Grief and Regret of all good, yea of all ſober and juſt Perſons even amongſt the *Jews* themſelves, as *Joſephus* himſelf confeſſes, ſpeaking of this Matter.

He wrote only one Epiſtle, probably not long before his Martyrdom, as appears by ſome Paſſages in it relating to the near approaching Ruin of the *Jewiſh* Nation. He directed it to the *Jewiſh* Converts, diſperſed up and down thoſe *Eaſtern* Countries, to comfort them under Sufferings, and confirm them againſt Error. He ſaw a great Degeneration and Declenſion of Manners coming on, and that the Purity of the *Chriſtian* Faith began to be undermined by the looſe Doctrines and Practices of the *Gnoſticks*, who under a Pretence of Zeal for the legal Rites generally mixed themſelves with the *Jews*: He beheld Libertiniſm marching on a-pace, and the Way to Heaven made ſoft and eaſy; Men declaiming againſt good Works as uſeleſs and unneceſſary, and aſſerting a naked Belief of the *Chriſtian* Doctrine to be ſufficient to Salvation. Againſt theſe the Apoſtle oppoſes himſelf, preſſes Purity, Patience and Charity, and all the Virtues of a good Life; and, by undeniable Arguments evinces, that that Faith only that carries along with it Obedience and an holy Life, can juſtify before God, and entitle us to eternal Life.

CHAP.

CHAP. XV.

The LIFE *of St.* SIMON *the Zealot.*

SAINT *Simon* the Apoſtle was, as ſome think, one of the four Brothers of our Saviour, Sons of *Joſeph* by his former Marriage, though no other Evidence appear for it, but that there was one *Simon* of the Number; too infirm a Foundation to build any Thing more upon than a meer Conjecture. In the Catalogue of the Apoſtles he is ſtiled *Simon the Canaanite*; whence ſome led by no other Reaſon that I know of, than the bare Sound of the Name, have concluded him born at *Cana* in *Galilee*; as, for the ſame Reaſon, others have made him the Bridegroom, at whoſe Marriage our Lord was there preſent, when he honoured the Solemnity with his firſt Miracle, turning Water into Wine. But this Word has no Relation to his Country, or the Place from whence he borrowed his Original, as plainly deſcending from that *Hebrew* Word which ſignifies *Zeal*, and denotes a hot and ſprightly Temper. Therefore what ſome of the Evangeliſts call *Canaanite*, others rendring the *Hebrew* by the *Greek* Word ſtile, *Simon Zelotes*, or the *Zealot*: So called, not (as *Nicephorus* thinks) from his burning Zeal, and ardent Affection to his Maſter, and his eager Deſire to advance his Religion in the World, but from his warm active Temper, and zealous Forwardneſs in ſome particular Way and Profeſſion of Religion before his coming to our Saviour.

BEING inveſted in the apoſtolical Office, no farther Mention appears of him in the Hiſtory of the Goſpel. Continuing with the Apoſtles till their Diſperſion up and down the World, he then applied himſelf to the Execution of his Charge. He is ſaid to have directed his Journey towards *Egypt*, thence to *Cyrene*, and *Africk*, and throughout *Mauritania* and all *Lybia*, preaching the Goſpel to thoſe remote and barbarous Countries. Nor could the Coldneſs of the Climate benumb his Zeal, or hinder him from ſhipping himſelf and the *Chriſtian* Doctrine over to the *Weſtern* Iſlands, yea, even to *Britain* itſelf. Here he preached, and wrought many Miracles, and after infinite Troubles and Difficulties which he underwent ſuffered Martyrdom for the Faith of *Chriſt*, as is not only affirmed by *Nicephorus* and *Dorotheus*, but expreſly owned in the *Greek Menologies*, where we are told, that he went at laſt into *Britain*, and having enlightned the Minds of many with the Doctrine of the Goſpel, was crucified by the *Infidels*, and buried there.

I know indeed that there want not thoſe who tell us, that after his preaching the Goſpel in *Egypt*, he went into *Meſopotamia*, where he met with St. *Jude* the Apoſtle, and together with him took his Journey into *Perſia*, where having gained a conſiderable Harveſt to the *Chriſtian* Faith, they were both crowned with Martyrdom; which *Baronius* himſelf confeſſes to be founded upon no better Authority, than the *Paſſions of the Apoſtles*, a Book which at every Turn he rejects as trifling and impertinent, as falſe and fabulous. But however, wide is their Miſtake who confound our Apoſtle with *Simeon* the Son of *Cleophas*, Succeſſor to St. *James the Juſt* in the See of *Jeruſalem*, who was crucified in the hundred and twentieth Year of his Age, in the Perſecution under *Trajan*: The different Character of their Perſons and Account both of their Acts and Martyrdoms being ſufficiently diſtinguiſhed in the Writings of the Church.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVI.

The LIFE *of St.* JUDE.

AS for his Deſcent and Parentage, he was one of our Lord's Kindred, *Nicephorus* truly making him the Son of *Joſeph*, and Brother to *James* Biſhop of *Jeruſalem*; that there was a *Jude* one of the Number is very evident, *Are no his Brethren* James, *and* Joſes, *and* Simon, *and* Judas? which makes me wonder the more at *Scaliger*, who ſo confidently denies that any of the Evangeliſts mention a *Jude the Brother of our Lord.* St. *Jerom* ſeems often to confound him with *Simon the Zealot*, whoſe Title he aſcribes to him, though ſecond Thoughts ſet him right, as indeed common Advertency could do no leſs, ſo plain is the Account which the Evangeliſts gave of this Matter. When called to the Diſcipleſhip we find not, as not meeting with him, till we find him enumerated in the Catalogue of Apoſtles; nor is any Thing particularly recorded of him afterwards, more than one Queſtion that he propounded to our Saviour, who having told them what great Things he and his Father would do, and what particular Manifeſtations after his Reſurrection he would make of himſelf to his ſincere Diſciples and Followers, St. *Jude* not knowing how this could conſiſt with the publick Solemnity of that glorious State they looked for, aſk-

ed him, What was the Reaſon that he would manifeſt himſelf to them, and not to the World? Our Lord replied, that the World was not capable of thoſe divine Manifeſtations, as being a Stranger, and an Enemy to what ſhould fit them for Fellowſhip with Heaven; that they were only good Men, Perſons of a divine Temper of Mind and religious Obſervers of his Laws and Will, whom God would honour with theſe familiar Converſes, and to admit to ſuch particular Acts of Grace and Favour.

EUSEBIUS relates, that ſoon after our Lord's Aſcenſion St. *Thomas* diſpatched *Thaddæus* the Apoſtle to *Abgarus* Governor of *Edeſſa*, where he healed Diſeaſes, wrought Miracles, expounded the Doctrines of *Chriſtianity*, and converted *Abgarus* and his People to the Faith: For all which Pains when the *Toparch* offered him vaſt Gifts and Preſents, he refuſed them with a noble Scorn, telling him, they had little Reaſon to receive from others, what they had freely relinquiſhed and left themſelves. A large Account of this whole Affair is extant in *Euſebius*, tranſlated by him out of *Syriack* from the Records of the City of *Edeſſa*. This *Thaddæus* St. *Jerom* expreſly makes to be our St. *Jude* though his bare Authority is not, in this Caſe, ſufficient Evidence; eſpecially ſince *Euſebius* makes him no more than one of the Seventy Diſciples, which he would ſcarce have done, had he been one of the Twelve. He calls him indeed an Apoſtle, but that may imply no more than according to the large Acceptation of the Word, that he was a Diſciple, a Companion and an Aſſiſtant to them, as we know the Seventy eminently were. Nor is any Thing more common in antient eccleſiaſtick Writers, than for the firſt Planters and Propagators of *Chriſtian* Religion in any Country to be honoured with the Name and Title of Apoſtles. But however this be, at his firſt ſetting out to preach the Goſpel, he went up and down *Judea* and *Galilee*, then through *Samaria* into *Idumea*, and to the Cities

of

of *Arabia*, and the neighbouring Countries, and after to *Syria* and *Meſopotamia*. *Nicephorus* adds, that he came at laſt to *Edeſſa*, where *Abgarus* was Governor, and where the other *Thaddæus*, one of the Seventy, had been before him. Here he perfected what the other had begun, and having by his Sermons and Miracles, eſtabliſhed the Religion of our Saviour, died a peaceable and quiet Death; though *Dorotheus* makes him ſlain at *Berytus*, and honourably buried there. By the almoſt general Conſent of the Writers of the *Latin* Church he is ſaid to have travelled into *Perſia*, where, after great Succeſs in his apoſtolical Miniſtry for many Years, he was at laſt, for his free and open reproving the ſuperſtitious Rites and Uſages of the *Magi*, cruelly put to Death.

THAT he was one of the married Apoſtles ſufficiently appears from his Grandſons mentioned by *Euſebius*, of whom *Hegiſippus* gives this Account. *Domitian* the Emperor, whoſe enormous Wickedneſſes had awakened in him the quickeſt Jealouſies, and made him ſuſpect every one that might look like a Corrival in the Empire, had heard that there were ſome of the Line of *David*, and *Chriſt*'s Kindred that did yet remain. Two Grand-Children of St. *Jude*, the Brother of our Lord, were brought before him: Having confeſſed that they were of the Race and Poſterity of *David*, he aſked what Poſſeſſions and Eſtate they had? They told him, that they had but a very few Acres of Land, out of the Improvement whereof they both paid him Tribute, and maintained themſelves with their own hard Labour, as by the Hardneſs and Callouſneſs of their Hands (which they then ſhewed him) did appear. He then enquired of them concerning *Chriſt*, and the State of his Kindgom, what Kind of Empire it was, and when and where it would commence. To which they replied, That his Kingdom was not of this World, nor of the Seigniories and Dominions of it, but heavenly and angelical; and would finally take

take Place in the End of the World, when coming with great Glory, he would judge the Quick and the Dead, and award all Men Recompences according to their Works. The Iſſue was, that looking upon the Meanneſs and Simplicity of the Men, as below his Jealouſies and Fears, he diſmiſſed them without any Severity uſed againſt them; who being now beheld not only as Kinſmen, but as Martyrs of our Lord, were honoured by all, preferred to Places of Authority and Government in the Church, and lived till the Time of *Trajan*.

St. *Jude* left only one Epiſtle, a catholick and univerſal Concernment, inſcribed at large to all *Chriſtians*. It was ſome Time before it met with general Reception in the Church, or was taken notice of. The Author indeed ſtiles not himſelf an Apoſtle, but no more does St. *James*, St. *John*, nor ſometimes St. *Paul* himſelf. And why ſhould he fare the worſe for his Humility, only for calling himſelf the *Servant of Chriſt*, when he might have added not only *Apoſtle*, but *the Brother of our Lord?* The beſt is, he has added what was equivalent, Jude *the Brother of* James, a Character that can belong to none but our Apoſtle; beſide, that the Title of the Epiſtle, which is of great Antiquity, runs thus, *The general Epiſtle of* Jude *the Apoſtle*. One great Argument, as St. *Jerom* informs us, againſt the Authority of this Epiſtle of old, was its quoting a Paſſage out of an *Apocryphal* Book of *Enoch*. This Book, called the *Apocalypſe of Enoch*, was very early extant in the Church, frequently mentioned, and Paſſages cited of it by *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Origen*, and others, ſome of them accounted it little leſs than canoncial. But what if our Apoſtle had it not out of the *Apocryphal* Book, but from ſome Prophecy current from Age to Age, handed to him by common Tradition, or immediately revealed to him by the Spirit of God? But ſuppoſe it taken out of that Book going under *Enoch*'s Name, this makes nothing

nothing againſt the Authority of the Epiſtle; every Thing, I hope, is not preſently falſe, that's contained in an *Apocryphal* and Uncanonical Writing; nor does the taking a ſingle Teſtimony out of it any more infer the Apoſtle's Approbation of all the reſt, than St. *Paul*'s quoting a good Sentence or two out of *Menander*, *Aratus*, and *Epimenides*, imply that he approved all the reſt of the Writings of thoſe *Heathen* Poets. And indeed nothing could be more fit and proper than this Way, if we conſider that the Apoſtle in this Epiſtle chiefly argues againſt the *Gnoſticks*, who mainly traded in ſuch Traditionary and Apocryph... Writings, and probably in this very Book of *Enoch*. The ſame Account may be given of that other Paſſage in this Epiſtle concerning the Contention between *Michael* the Archangel and the Devil about the Burial of *Moſes*'s Body, no where extant in the holy Records, ſuppoſed to have been taken out of a *Jewiſh* Writing called the *Diſmiſſion of Moſes*, mentioned by ſome of the *Greek* Fathers, under the Title of *the Aſcenſion of Moſes*, in which this Paſſage was upon Record. Nor is it any more a Wonder that St. *Jude* ſhould do this, than that St. *Paul* ſhould put down *Jannes* and *Jambres* for the two Magicians of *Pharoah* that oppoſed *Moſes*, which he muſt either derive from Tradition, or fetch out of ſome uncanonical Author of thoſe Times, there being no Mention of their Names in *Moſes*'s Relation of that Matter. But be theſe Paſſages whence they will, it is enough to us that the Spirit of God has made them authentick, and conſecrated them Part of the holy Canon.

The Deſign of this Epiſtle is to preſerve *Chriſtians* from the Infection of *Gnoſticiſm*, the looſe and debauched Principles vented by *Simon Magus* and his Followers, whoſe wretched Doctrines and Practices he briefly and elegantly repreſents, perſuading *Chriſtians* heartily *to contend for the Faith that had been delivered to them*, and to avoid theſe pernicions Seducers as Peſts and Firebrands.

CHAP.

CHAP. XVII.

The LIFE *of St.* MATTHIAS.

A Vacancy being made in the College of Apoſtles, by the Death of *Judas Iſcariot*, the firſt Thing they did, after their Return from Mount *Olivet*, where our Lord took his Leave of them, to St. *John*'s Houſe, in Mount *Sion* (the Place, if we may believe *Nicephorus*, where the Church met together) was to fill up their Number with a fit and proper Perſon. To this Purpoſe *Peter* acquainted them, that *Judas*, according to the prophetical Prediction, being fallen from his Miniſtry, it was neceſſary that another ſhould be ſubſtituted in his Room, one that had been a conſtant Companion and Diſciple of the Holy *Jeſus*, and conſequently capable of bearing Witneſs to his Life, Death and Reſurrection. Two were propounded, in order to the Choice, *Joſeph* called *Barſabas*, and *Juſtus* (whom ſome make the ſame with *Joſes*, one of the Brothers of our Lord) and *Matthias*, both duly qualified for the Place. The Way of Election was by Lots, a Way frequently uſed both among *Jews* and *Gentiles*, for the Determination of doubtful and difficult Caſes, and eſpecially the chuſing Judges and Magiſtrates: And this Way was here taken (ſays one of the Antients) on purpoſe to comply with the old Cuſtom obſerved among the *Jews*, that in an Election of an Apoſtle they might not ſeem to depart from the Way that had been uſed under the legal State. The *Pſeudo-Dionyſius*, Author of the

Eccleſiaſtick

Eccleſiaſtick Hierarchy, together with his two Paraphraſts, expreſly ſays, that it was not a Lot that was uſed in this Caſe, to determine the Matter, but ſome immediate and extraordinary Sign from Heaven, falling upon the Candidate, and diſcovering him to be the Perſon choſen by God. But this is directly contrary to the very Words of the ſacred Story, which ſay, that *they gave forth their Lots, and that the Lot fell upon* Matthias. And this Courſe the Apoſtles the rather took, becauſe the Holy Ghoſt was not yet given, by whoſe Aid and Inſpirations, they were chiefly guided afterwards: And that the Buſineſs might proceed with the greater Regularity and Succeſs, they firſt ſolemnly make their Addreſs to Heaven, that the omniſcient Being that governed the World, and perfectly underſtood the Tempers and Diſpoſitions of Men, would immediately guide and direct the Choice, and ſhew which of theſe two he would appoint to take that Part of the apoſtolical Charge, from which *Judas* was ſo lately fallen. The Lots being put into the Urn *Matthias* his Name was drawn out, and thereby the Apoſtolate devolved upon him.

AMONG many other Apocryphal Writings aſcribed to the Apoſtles, there was a Goſpel publiſhed under his Name, mentioned by *Euſebius* and the Antients, and condemned with the reſt, by *Gelaſius*, Biſhop of *Rome*, as it had been rejected by others before him: Under his Name alſo there were extant Traditions, cited by *Clemens* of *Alexandria* from whence, no Queſtion it was, that the *Nicolaitans* borrowed that Saying of his, which they abuſed to ſo vile and beaſtly Purpoſes, as under the pretended Patronage of his Name and Doctrines the *Marcionites* and *Valentinians* defended ſome of their moſt abſurd and impious Opinions.

CHAP. XVIII.

The LIFE *of St.* MARK *the Evangeliſt.*

SAINT *Mark*, though carrying ſomething of *Roman* in his Name, probably aſſumed by him, upon ſome very great Change or Accident in his going for *Italy* and *Rome*; was doubtleſs born of *Jewiſh* Parents, originally deſcended of the *Tribe of Levi*, and the Line of the Prieſthood, and (if *Nicephorus* ſays true) Siſter's Son to *Peter*, though by others, againſt all Reaſon, confounded with *John*, ſirnamed *Mark*, the Son of *Mary*, and *Mark* Siſter's Son to *Barnabas*.

By *Peter* he was ſent into *Egypt*, to plant *Chriſtianity* in thoſe Parts, fixing his main Reſidence at *Alexandria*, and the Places thereabouts; where ſo great (ſays *Euſebius*) was the Succeſs of his Miniſtry, that he converted Multitudes both of Men and Women, not only to the embracing of the *Chriſtian* Religion, but to a more than ordinary ſtrict Profeſſion of it, inſomuch that *Philo* wrote a Book of their peculiar Rites and Way of Life, the only Reaſon why St. *Hierom* reckons him among the Writers of the Church. Indeed, *Philo* the *Jew*, wrote a Book, extant at this Day, wherein he ſpeaks of a Sort of Perſons called *Therapeutai*, who, in many Parts of the World, but eſpecially in a pleaſant Place near the *Maræotic* Lake in *Egypt*, had formed themſelves into religious Societies, and gives a large Account of their

Rites

Rites and Cuſtoms, their ſtrict, philoſophical, and contemplative Courſe of Life. He tells us of them, that when they firſt entered upon this Way, they renounced all ſecular Intereſts and Employments, and leaving their Eſtates to their Relations, retired into Groves, Gardens, and Places devouted to Solitude and Contemplation; that they had their Houſes or Colleges, not contiguous, that ſo being free from Noiſe and Tumult, they might the better miniſter to the Deſign of a contemplative Life; nor yet removed at too great a Diſtance, that they might maintain mutual Society, and be conveniently capable of helping and aſſiſting one another. In each of theſe Houſes there was an Oratory, wherein they diſcharged the more ſecret and ſolemn Rites of their Religion: divided in the Middle with a Partition-wall, three or four Cubits high, the one Apartment being for the Men, and the other for the Women: Here they publickly met every Seventh-Day, where being ſet acccording to their Seniority, and having compoſed themſelves with great Decency and Reverence, the moſt aged Perſon among them, and beſt ſkilled in the *Dogmata* and Principles of their Inſtitution came forth into the midſt, gravely and ſoberly diſcourſing on what might make the deepeſt Impreſſion upon their Minds, the reſt of them attending with a profound Silence, and only teſtifying their Aſſent, with the Motion of their Eyes or Head. Their Diſcourſes were uſually myſtical and allegorical, ſeeking hidden Senſes under plain Words; and of ſuch an allegorical Philoſophy conſiſted the Books of their Religion, left them by their Anceſtors: The Law they compared to an Animal, the Letter of it rembling the Body, while the Soul of it lay in thoſe abſtruſe and recondite Notions, which the external Veil and Surface of the Words concealed from vulgar Underſtandings. He tells us alſo, that they took very little Care of the Body, perfecting their Minds by Precepts of Wiſdom and Religion; the Day

they entirely ſpent in pious and divine Meditations, in reading and expounding the Law and the Pro- and the holy Volumes of the antient Founders of their Sect, and in ſinging Hymns to the Honour of their Maker; abſolutely temperate and abſtemious, neither eating nor drinking till Night, the only Time they thought fit to refreſh and regale the Body; ſome of them, out of an inſatiable Deſire of growing in Knowledge and Virtue, faſting many Days together.

ST. *Mark* did not confine his Preaching to *Alexandria*, and the *Oriental* Parts of *Egypt*, but removed *Weſtward* to the Parts of *Lybia*, going through the Countries of *Marmoria*, *Pantapolis*, and others thereabouts, where though the People were both Barbarous in their Manners, and Idolaters in their Worſhip, yet by his Preaching and Miracles he made Way for the Entertainment of the Goſpel, and left them not, till he had not only gained them to, but confirmed them in the Profeſſion of it. Returning to *Alexandria* he preached freely, and ordered and diſpoſed the Affairs of the Church, and wiſely provided for a Succeſſion by conſtituting Governors and Paſtors of it. But the reſtleſs Enemy of the Souls of Men would not long ſuffer him to be quiet: It was the Time of *Eaſter*, at what Time the great Solemnities of *Serapis* happened to be celebrated, when the Minds of the People being excited to a paſſionate Vindication of the Honour of their Idol, broke in upon St. *Mark*, then engaged in the ſolemn Celebration of divine Worſhip, and binding his Feet with Cords, dragged him through the Streets and the moſt craggy Places to the *Bucelus*, a Precipice near the Sea, and for that Night thruſt him into Priſon, where his Soul was by a divine Viſion, refreſhed and encouraged under the Ruins of his ſhattered Body. Early the next Morning the Tragedy began again, dragging him about in the ſame Manner, till his Fleſh being racked off, and his Blood run out, his Spirits failed, and he expired.

CHAP.

CHAP. XIX.

The LIFE *of St.* LUKE *the Evangeliſt.*

SAINT *Luke* was born at *Antioch*, the Metropolis of *Syria*, a City celebrated for its extraordinary Bleſſings and Eminences, the Pleaſantneſs of its Situation, the Fertility of its Soil, the Riches of its Traffick, the Wiſdom of its Senate, the Learning of its Profeſſors, the Civility and Politeneſs of its Inhabitants, by the Pens of ſome of the greateſt Orators of their Times; and yet above all theſe renowned for this one peculiar Honour, that here it was that *the Diſciples were firſt called Chriſtians.*

HE was a *Jewiſh* Proſelyte, *Antioch* abounding with Men of that Nation, who had here their Synagogues and Schools of Education; ſo that we need not, with *Theophylact*, ſend him to *Jeruſalem* to be inſtructed in the Study of the Law. As for that Opinion of *Epiphanius* and others, that he was one of the Seventy Diſciples, one of thoſe that deſerted our Lord for the unwelcome Diſcourſe he made to them, but recalled afterwards by St. *Paul*, I behold it as a Story of the ſame Coin and Stamp with that of St. *Mark*'s leaving *Chriſt* upon the ſame Occaſion, and being reduced by *Peter*, and that the one was made to anſwer the other; as upon no better Ground it is ſaid that he was one of thoſe two Diſciples that were going to *Emmaus*. For beſides the Silence of the Scripture in the Caſe, he himſelf plainly confeſſes,

that

he was not from the Beginning an *Eye-witneſs and Miniſter of the Word.* Moſt probable it is, that he was converted by St. *Paul* during his Abode at *Antioch*, when, as the Apoſtles, of Catchers of Fiſh were become Fiſhers of Men; ſo he, of a Phyſician of the Body became a Phyſician of the Soul. This, *Nicephorus* will have to have been done at *Thebes*, the chief City of *Bœotia*, about forty Miles from *Athens*, though it appears not to me by any credible Author that ever St. *Paul* was there. He became ever after his inſeparable Companion and Fellow-labourer in the Miniſtry of the Goſpel, eſpecially after his going into *Macedonia*, from which Time, in recording the Hiſtory of St. *Paul*'s Travels, he always ſpeaks of himſelf in his own Perſon. He followed him in all his Dangers, was with him at his ſeveral Arraignments at *Jeruſalem*, accompanied him in his deſperate Voyage to *Rome*, where he ſtill attended on him to ſerve his Neceſſities, and ſupply thoſe miniſterial Offices, which the Apoſtle's Confinement would not ſuffer him to undergo, and eſpecially in carrying Meſſages to thoſe Churches where he had planted *Chriſtianity.* This infinitely endeared him to St. *Paul*, who owned him for his *Fellow-labourer*, called him *the beloved Phyſician*, and *the Brother whoſe Praiſe is in the Goſpel, throughout all the Churches*; which the Ancients, and eſpecially *Ignatius*, apply to our Evangeliſt.

PROBABLE it is that he did not wholly leave St. *Paul* till he had finiſhed his Courſe, and crowned all with Martyrdom; though there are that tell us, that he left St. *Paul* at *Rome*, and returned back into the *Eaſt*, travelled into *Egypt* and the Parts of *Lybia*, preached the Goſpel, wrought Miracles, converted Multitudes, conſtituted Guides and Miniſters of Religion; yea, that he himſelf took upon him the epiſcopal Charge of the City of *Thebes*. *Epiphanius* gives us this Account, That he firſt preached in *Dalmatia*, and *Galatia* (he reads it in *Gaul*, or *France*, and peremptorily affirms, that they are all miſtaken that

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ſay that it was *Galatia* where *Creſcens* preached, though ſome think that himſelf in the mean while is under the moſt confident Miſtake) then in *Italy* and *Macedonia*, where he ſpared no Pains, declined no Dangers, that he might faithfully diſcharge the Truſt committed to him. The Ancients are not very well agreed, either about the Time or Manner of his Death; ſome affirming him to die in *Egypt*, others in *Greece*; the *Roman Matyrology*, in *Bithynia*; *Dorotheus*, at *Epheſus*; ſome make him die a natural, others a violent Death. Indeed neither *Euſebius* nor St. *Jerom* take any Notice of it; but *Nazianzen*, *Paulinus* Biſhop of *Nola*, and ſeveral others expreſly aſſert his Martyrdom, whereof *Nicephorus* gives this particular Account, That coming into *Greece* he ſucceſsfully preached, and baptized many Converts into the *Chriſtian* Faith, till a Party of *Infidels* making Head againſt him, drew him to Execution, and in want of a Croſs whereon to diſpatch him preſently, hanged him on an Olive-tree, in the eightieth (the eighty-fourth ſays St. *Jerom*) Year of his Age. *Kirſtenius*, from an ancient *Arabic* Writer, makes him to have ſuffered Martyrdom at *Rome*; which he thinks might probably be after St. *Paul*'s firſt Impriſonment there, and Departure thence, when St. *Luke* being left behind as his Deputy to ſupply his Place, was ſhortly after put to Death; the Reaſon (ſays he) why he no longer continued his Hiſtory of the *Apoſtles Acts*, which ſurely he would have done, had he lived any conſiderable Time after St. *Paul*'s Departure. His Body afterwards, by the Command of *Conſtantine*, or his Son *Conſtantius*, was ſolemnly removed to *Conſtantinople*, and buried in the great Church built to the Memory of the Apoſtles.

Two Books he wrote for the Uſe of the Church, his *Goſpel*, and the Hiſtory of the *Apoſtles Acts*, both dedicated to *Theophilus*, which many of the Ancients ſuppoſe to be but a feigned Name, denoting no more than a *Lover of God*, a Title common to every *Chriſ-*

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tian. While others with much better Reaſon, conclude it the proper Name of a particular Perſon; eſpecially ſince the Stile of *Moſt Excellent* is attributed to him, the uſual Title and Form of Addreſs in thoſe Times to Princes and great Men. *Theophylact* ſtiles him *a Man of Conſular Dignity, and probably a Prince*; the Author of the *Recognitions* makes him a Nobleman of *Antioch*, converted by *Peter*, and who, upon his Converſion, gave his Houſe to the Church for the Place of their publick and ſolemn Meetings. We may probably ſuppoſe him to have been ſome Magiſtrate, whom St. *Luke* had converted and baptized, to whom he now dedicated theſe Books, not only as a Teſtimony of honourable Reſpect, but as a Means of giving him farther Certainty and Aſſurance of thoſe Things, wherein he had been inſtructed by him. As for his *Goſpel*, St. *Jerom* ſuppoſes it to have been written in *Achaia*, during his Travels with St. *Paul* in thoſe Parts, whoſe Help he is generally ſaid to have made uſe of in the compoſing of it, and that this the Apoſtle primarily intends when he ſo often ſpeaks of *his Goſpel*. But whatever Aſſiſtance St. *Paul* might contribute towards it, we are ſure the Evangeliſt himſelf tells us, that he derived his Intelligence in theſe Matters from thoſe, *who from the Beginning had been Eye-witneſſes and Miniſters of the Word*. Nor does it in the leaſt detract from the Authority of his Relations, that he himſelf was not preſent at the doing of them; for if we conſider who they were from whom he derived his Accounts of Things, *Habuit utique authenticam paraturam*, as *Tertullian* ſpeaks, he had a Stock both of Credit and Intelligence ſufficiently authentick to proceed upon; delivering nothing in his whole Hiſtory but what he had immediately received from Perſons preſent at, and concerned in the Things which he has left upon Record.

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FINIS.